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ALGIERS IN 1857.

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L. & D. DELP

KANHART. LITH

ALGIERS IN 1857.

ITS ACCESSIBILITY, CLIMATE, AND RESOURCES

DESCRIBED

WITH ESPECIAL REFERENCE TO ENGLISH INVALIDS.

ALSO

DETAILS OF RECREATION

OBTAINABLE IN ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD,

ADDED FOR THE USE OF TRAVELLERS IN GENERAL.

38103

BY THE

REV. E. W. L. DAVIES, M.A. Oxon.

VICAR OF ADLINGFLEET, AND RURAL DEAN OF SELBY.

LONDON:

LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, LONGMANS, & ROBERTS.

1858.

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DEDICATION.

THIS LITTLE WORK IS DEDICATED

To the Memory

OF

L. J. D.

A WIFE AND MOTHER,

WHOSE RESTORATION TO HEALTH WAS THE SOLE OBJECT OF THE WRITER'S VISIT TO ALGIERS.

By God's will she did not recover;
Yet it is consolatory to know that an alleviation of pain, mental and bodily, was at least one happy result of the journey.

The soft but invigorating climate gave at once ease to the lungs and tone to the constitution;
While the novel and varied scenes of African life never failed to supply attractive subjects for the pencil and pleasing occupation for the mind.

In choosing a patron for inscription,
custom inclines us towards the rich and mighty of the Earth:
Be it mine to go still higher, even to one who now shines
"as the stars for ever and ever."

E. W. L. D.

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ALGIERS IN 1857.

CHAPTER I.

ROUTE AND RESIDENCE.

When a medical man, who has the confidence of his patient, is good enough to express an opinion that the climate of England is no longer suited to his ailment, the question is at once asked, "Whither shall I go for a better?" — and then follows a list of Montpelliers and Spas, so numerous, so various, and so opposite, that the inquirer is only perplexed by the answer.

At length Murray, or a map, or some member of "the Travellers'" comes to his aid,—the choice is made, and the invalid proceeds to his destination. Instances of this kind are so

frequent, that there is scarcely a week in a winter in which English families do not shut up their houses suddenly, and seek health and existence in climates less northerly and more genial than their own. Like the Sultan of Serendib, however, in search of happiness, they leave home knowing their own wants, but ignorant of the means and resources by which those wants are to be supplied: they either take no pains, or they are unable to obtain correct information on the peculiarities of the climate and country in which they intend to sojourn; and thus the visit is too often marked by discomfort and extortion, if not by even more unsatisfactory results. This was just our predicament, when, under medical directions, we were ordered off in mid-winter to the shores of the Mediterranean. Gibraltar, Malaga, and Algiers, were severally recommended; but, from the following report, lighted upon at the last moment, Algiers was preferred, and thither we bent our steps: —

"Winter	62·13°
Spring	61·04
Summer	75·09
Autumn	78·26

The mean temperature of Algiers for the whole year being 69·13°, it most approaches that of Malta; but exceeds it by 2°, Malaga by 3°, Madeira by 4°, Rome by 9°, Nice by 10°, and Pau by 13°. Cairo is 3° higher (mean), yet its winter is 4° colder than that of Algiers."

A land of promise, wherein it would appear that the heat of summer is not excessive, and the bitterness of winter is altogether unknown; and, under a conviction that the above figures represented facts, at least for one year, we left England in a storm of snow, crossed the Channel at Folkestone, and arrived at Paris on the following day. Here a cold, black wind, blowing keenly from the east, and a sharp frost prevailing, we took tickets for Lyons without delay: we started by express train at 11 A. M., and reached Lyons comfortably at 9.30 P. M. On passing Dijon, about 200 miles south of Paris, we again encountered snow, which, destroying the effect of the scenery in the most beautiful part of France,—the valley of the Rhone,—accompanied us until we reached Avignon. We were warned to make no long stay at Lyons, the birthplace of

republicanism; and we found, to our cost, that the little time we were compelled to remain there was "by much too much," as the host was indifferent, the servants uncivil, and the bill extortionate. However, Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe occupied the same hotel with us, and after a pleasant conversation with that lady, our grievances vanished with the snow. We left Lyons at 8 A. M. by express, and, travelling through a vast garden of olives, vines, and mulberry-trees, verily a land of wine and oil, we reached Marseilles at 4 P.M., and took up our quarters at the Hotel de l'Empereur. The journey from Lyons was not without its incident. In the same carriage with ourselves was an English lady and two Lyonnaise: the former wore a respirator, which, as she was muzzled and might have been dangerous, seemed to give some annoyance to those ladies. "Mais c'est dégoutant," said one. "C'est affreux," answered the other. Upon which the English lady, who had hitherto taken no part in the conversation, said quietly, and in excellent French, "Believe me, ladies, the respirator is a very convenient thing for ugly faces. I advise you to get one without

delay." No broadside was ever fired with greater effect; it was a shock to their *amour propre* such as two French women had rarely sustained, and evoked in return a volley of small shot such as Lyons alone or Wapping Old Stairs could equal. They finally left the carriage, muttering derisively: "Les Anglais savent faire les complimens; c'est pourquoi ils sont détestés partout."

There are winds of an ill savour, which blow from the Levant and from the north-west over Marseilles, and which are highly pernicious to delicate lungs, and indeed to English lungs in general; but there are vapours of a far worse savour, which rise from the dead water of the inner port, and which are quite sufficient to account for the pestilences which have so frequently devastated this densely populated town. The inhabitants need not go beyond this evil to trace a mischief of which the world has to complain. The inner port is a miasmatic lake of bilge-water, into which the refuse of the town and shipping falls, and which, from the untidal character of the sea, remains unchanged and unchangeable. In England we have pretty nearly its counterpart

in the Float of Bristol; though here, unlike Marseilles, the citizens dam up the offensive water with flood-gates, and, for commercial purposes, endure it within their walls.

We arrived at Marseilles on a Friday, and, being anxious to get forward without delay, inquired at the Hotel de l'Empereur how soon the first packet sailed for Algiers. Not only the host, but every servant to whom we put the question, gave a decided answer that no packet left before Tuesday. Dissatisfied with this information, we sallied forth into the town, and found, within one hundred yards of our hotel, the Bureau of the Messageries Impériales, at No. 1, Rue Mangrand, Place Royale. Here we soon discovered that the foregoing landlord and his men were either troubled with very short memories, or that they lied in league. The "Télémaque" was appointed to sail on the following morning, as usual; so we at once took berths in her, as near midships as we could get them, for Algiers. The price of passage for a first-class passenger is ninety-five francs; for which the company take you and your luggage on board, get your passport viséd, and provide you

during the voyage with every comfort and luxury that can be desired: even a cup of good tea at daylight is not forgotten. The accommodation, the cleanliness, and the living, is in fact equal, and in some respects superior, to that of the best hotels in France. The passage is usually performed in forty-eight hours—two days and two nights ; but some of the fast steamers of this excellent company take little more than forty hours for the trip. The Messageries Impériales alone have a fleet of fifty fine steamers, averaging from 200 to 370 horse-power, for this and other lines in the Mediterranean. On Tuesdays and Saturdays a mail steamer belonging to this company always leaves Algiers and Marseilles, weather permitting, at 12 o'clock at noon ; and on Thursdays, the packets of another company do the same service. So that the traveller has the choice of two companies, both carrying mails, and three days in the week, for his passage from either place ;—no small advantage, if the weather be unpropitious, or despatch necessary to his movements.* It should be mentioned

* The electric telegraph wires now connect Algiers with the capitals of Europe.

that, if a family return-ticket be taken, a reduction of thirty per cent. on the cost of the passage is allowed by the Messageries Impériales, and that three months is the period for which such tickets are issued. Indeed, a friend of ours, crossing over, induced the manager of the bureau to extend the period of return to four months, of which extension he and his family availed themselves almost at the last day.

Saturday was a cold but glorious day for the sea, and we embarked comfortably at noon, with every prospect of a pleasant and calm voyage. On quitting the picturesque and beautiful bay of Marseilles, the speed of the "Télémaque" was such that in little more than an hour the town and surrounding châteaux, the forts, and martello towers were all jumbled together in one confused mass; and nothing could be distinguished with accuracy but the rugged and broken outline of the distant hills which flank and support the town. Attracted by the cook's preparations and the sundry scraps which were occasionally cast over the ship's side, a small convoy of three herring gulls left the bay simultaneously with our-

selves, and followed merrily in our wake. It was remarkable how persistent they were in their attentions throughout the voyage: the last thing at night and the first thing in the morning, there they were astern of us, steadily pursuing the ship, and keeping a sharp look-out on the cook's mate. We passed between the Balearic Isles at mid-day on Sunday; but they, looking neither to the right hand nor to the left, held on their course with us straight for Algiers, and only parted company just as the good ship approached her moorings. There could be no mistake about the birds, for one had a broken feather in his right wing, while the plumage of a second was white and patriarchal; he looked a very old gull indeed, and probably knew every line of the Messageries Impériales as well as the most experienced pilot attached to that service.

The passengers on board were not conscious of any improvement in the temperature until we approached the shores of Africa: but as we drew near to Algiers it was evident from the shawls and wraps which lay neglected on the benches that they, at all events, were not in the same request as they were when we quitted

Marseilles. The Little Atlas and Jugurthine Mountains were covered with snow; but, being at such a distance, the cold winds that blew from them to us were agreeably tempered by the hot sun ere they reached the sea: and a pleasant feeling it was to sit on the deck in mid-winter, and luxuriate in a climate neither too hot to be oppressive, nor cold enough to cause discomfort to the most sensitive skin. The last convulsive strokes of the engine had scarcely ceased to vibrate, ere the bulwarks were beset with a swarm of importunate Moors, craving a fare for their boats. Their muscular and brawny limbs, unshackled by bandages in the form of dress, reminded us strongly of old Charon, as we used to see him in the Pantheon of our early days: but these Moors gave us proof, by their merciless extortion, that they were no kin to the honest ferryman of the Styx; though, it is true, his task was a lighter one, inasmuch as he wafted over the spirit only, while here the body and baggage of the living man were the material weight requiring deportation ashore.

The fair city of Algiers stands high and erect above the sea, and seems to preside over

it, in all its variations of peace and agitation, as the mighty Deys of old presided o'er the restless and turbulent subjects within her walls: the sea was not more uncontrollable than were the wills of the desperate men who erewhile inhabited this beautiful city. White, glistening white is she, from the Casbah that crowns the heights to the sea that ripples at her feet. But white as she is, blood enough has been spilled within her walls to stain the whole city blood-red, after the colour of that flag which rendered the pirates of Algiers dreaded and accursed throughout the civilised world.

Our baggage at the Douanerie proved no impediment on this occasion: coming from France with passports *en règle*, no examination was thought necessary, and we were passed at once into the hands of the ruthless Moors, who waited at the doors to fight for our luggage, and then shoulder it to our respective quarters. The Hôtel d'Orient stands in front of the Grande Place, and, from its airy situation and commanding view of the sea, thither we first bent our steps and inquired for rooms. After ascending three

flights of stairs, floored with tiles and very slippery, we were shown two apartments of small dimensions, for which three francs each per day were demanded; and these being the only vacant rooms in the house, we declined occupying them, on account of their inconvenient height. We then tried the Hôtel de la Régence *, also in the Grande Place: a handsome fountain playing in front, and a grove of orange trees, on which the ripe fruit was still hanging, and under the shade of which venerable Moors and long-bearded Turks were calmly smoking on rustic benches, combined to invite the travellers to repose. Here, again, rooms on the second étage, up fifty weary steps, at three francs each, were our Hobson's choice. For *pension*, in the sâlon, which included breakfast at ten and dinner at six, with half a bottle of very ordinary wine at each meal, a charge of seven francs

* Besides the Hôtels d'Orient and la Régence, the Hôtels de Paris, in the Rue Bab-el-Oued, and de Rouen, in the Rue des Trois-Couleurs, afford excellent accommodation: the former of the two was especially frequented by English bachelors, and its situation is better than that of the Hôtel de Rouen.

was made for each person: then fire, bougies, service, tea, coffee, and even hot water, were charged extra. Thus, all complete, the expense of a visitor at this hotel would be about fourteen francs a day, or one hundred a week. A friend of ours staying at the Régence, with his lady and maid, and a child about six years old, occupied three good rooms on the first étage, for which, with board, he paid no less than 1200 francs, or 48*l.*, a month. In a few weeks, however, after our arrival, he changed his quarters, took a suite of commodious and excellent apartments in a private house in the Rue de la Marine, for which he paid 300 francs a month; then his *pension*—twelve different dishes at each meal—was supplied to him from a neighbouring inn, the Hôtel de l'Europe, at another 300 francs; by which arrangement not only did he save one half of his money, but he really obtained double the comfort.

The constant ebb and flow in the tide of visitors created so unceasing a disquietude at the Régence, added to the fifty steps aforesaid, and the dust of an adjoining Moorish house then under process of demolition, that it soon

became unbearable to an invalid requiring peace and repose. Consequently we determined to leave, and enter into private lodgings. Of these there was a goodly choice, notwithstanding the assertion of the host and hostess that such accommodation was not to be found in the city. It may be the case in England, but it certainly is so on the Continent, when you rely solely on the information of others with respect to your own wants, it rarely happens that you get them satisfactorily supplied. We found, on investigating for ourselves, that lodgings at Algiers were as good, commodious, and reasonable in price as in provincial French towns in general. The ladies, however, who let lodgings do not unfrequently belong to a class of which it is well to beware. Either they are put in by wealthy Jews, to manage and underlet the rooms; or they have been the mistresses of officers, disinclined or too poor to marry, who, by way of disentanglement, portion them off with a furnished house, to provide for themselves. It is always advisable in making terms with the "bourgeoise" to commit them to paper, as a contract and inventory signed by both

OUR OWN STREET - RUE D'ORLEANS

parties will frequently be found a convenient safeguard. But we had no reason to complain of our bourgeoise; on the contrary, during the three months we occupied her appartments, it is pleasant to mention that we always found her obliging, complaisant, and most faithful to her engagement. The only grievance * of which we had to complain was one of almost universal prevalence in Algiers: there were forty-eight stone steps—a sort of fixed tread-mill—up to our apartments on the second étage. The street in which we were located was called Rue d'Orléans, and had the advantage of being among the few streets in the French quarter of the city which did not admit of the passage of carriages through it. So narrow was the way, and so high were the buildings, that the morning sun only peeped in just to dry the dews of night, and give a healthful character to the street.

* Should mosquitoes be found troublesome, a few sprigs of wormwood (absinthe) placed about his pillow will generally protect the sleeper from their attacks. Should this be insufficient, let him rub the wormwood gently over his forehead and wrists the last thing at night; and then neither they nor other noxious insects will take a fancy to him.

For two rooms, comfortably furnished but of small dimensions, with a yet smaller kitchen, we paid sixty francs a month; for which sum, in advance, linen, crockery, cooking, and attendance were included. At first it was no small amusement to pick up an Arab basket-boy and go a marketing; but as the weather grew warmer it became a great bore to descend a steep hill and flights of steps innumerable to the fish-market, and then to face about and work up again. The labour served daily to recal the Sibyl's warning to the hero of old; while the fish venders, in person and practice, helped to confirm the impression that one had paid a hasty visit to the inhabitants of a worse world than our own. Mahonese, Maltese, Neapolitans and Spaniards,—Jews, Turks, heretics, and infidels,—it is hard to conceive a more villanous set of visages than they possessed! When the poet described the Cyclops as one-eyed monsters to be found on the coast of Sicily, he certainly must have crossed the water and taken a peep at the fish-market of Algiers. Every other man was "speechless in one eye"—a kind of Monops who stared at you as if you were Outis and he Polyphemus

himself. But the fish they sold was good and cheap; that is to say, cheap if you bought it at half the price they asked for it, and good if you visited the market at the right time: for instance, weather permitting, a pair of soles a foot long might be bought for one franc; a John-dory (*St. Pierre*), large enough for four persons, at ten sous; small red mullet (*rouget*) at a sou each; and sardines, fresh and delicious, at three sous a pound: besides, there were whiting, herring, mackerel, turbot, white-bait and flying-fish. Then, in the vegetable market, green peas were to be had all the winter; wild asparagus and new potatoes in February, and Alpine strawberries in the month of March; besides all the vegetables and many more than we have in England, in great profusion and excellence. Game of almost every kind, from a quail to a wild boar, found its way to Algiers throughout the year; if it was not exposed in market it was always to be purchased from the Arab dealers, *malgré* the game laws and the *clôture de chasse*.

In consequence of the long and unusual rain which fell during the autumn of 1856, and the total want of shelter among the pastoral Arabs

and colonists, no less than 600,000 head of cattle perished in the interior: the price of meat was therefore much higher than it had hitherto been, but the quality was of an average character. With such materials, and the aid of the finest fruit, and excellent wine produced in the country or derived from France and Spain, no *bon-vivant* need despair of obtaining at Algiers the gratification of his utmost desire. But the invalid would do well to take from England a small stock of black tea, groats, arrowroot, castor oil, and cod-liver oil, if required. The tea sold at Algiers at sixteen francs a pound is wretched stuff; groats and arrowroot are not obtainable at any price; the cod-liver oil is undrinkable; and the castor oil is frequently a vile compound of olive and croton oil, a mixture, it need scarcely be said, not only not serviceable, but highly injurious to the human stomach. Coffee, as prepared by the native Moors, is excellent: the berry is pounded in enormous mortars, and thus yields an aroma that is not found in the *café noir* of the French. *Cafés maures* abound throughout the city, and a cup of delicious coffee, with sugar, is always procurable at a moment's

notice for one sou; for which small sum it is also brought, if required, to your private rooms. In this climate a cup of coffee at noon is as necessary for the stomach as a flannel belt or the silken cincture which is so universally worn by the natives. By taking a little trouble and giving orders beforehand, good cow's milk might be procured at eight sous a quart; but the supply of goat's milk, fresh, regular, and abundant, was always obtainable at your very doors. Large flocks of goats, their noses muzzled and their udders almost trailing the ground, were driven in from the heights at daybreak; while the tinkling bells, appended to their necks, gave notice to the householders that they must be quick in drawing their daily supply of milk ere the flock passed onwards to a different quarter of the town. Pure and nutritious was the milk, and generally sweet; though it did happen sometimes that it was tainted by some unsavoury shrub on which the animal had browsed, and a kind of turnipy flavour was imparted to it, such as we occasionally find in the milk of our own stalled cows. From three to five in the morning, the Arab scavengers swept the streets,

and carried off the refuse of the city on their unshod and noiseless donkeys. Thus, when the world was astir, nothing that could offend the eye or nose of the most sensitive person ever appeared, even in the most unfrequented streets: in fact, what with drains, fountains, scavengers, and the natural delicacy of the Moorish population, no city ever presented a cleaner appearance,—a feature by no means remarkable in the provincial towns of the Continent. It is quite sufficient internal evidence against Homer that he never visited Algiers as it now is, or he would not have failed to give it the happy distinction it so well deserves, that of "The well-scavenged city."

The town of Algiers has a population of 70,000, and stands against a precipitous hill in the form of an equilateral triangle, the base of which rests on the sea, while the apex is formed by the Casbah, the ancient fortress of the Deys. The lower half, with the exception of two grand mosques, consists of wharfs, warehouses, government houses, squares, and streets, principally built and occupied by the French; while the upper half is almost exclusively Moorish, both in building and popu-

lation. The Place Royale covers more than two acres of ground in the centre of the city, and is adorned with orange and lime trees, a pleasant fountain, and a fine equestrian statue of the unfortunate Duke of Orleans. Two large streets, called Bab-el-oued and Bab-azoun, running north and south, intersect the city; and were it not that, as a thoroughfare for carriages and general traffic, they are somewhat narrow and confined, nothing could be more convenient than the colonnades by which they are flanked: so that, let the weather be fair or foul, rain or sunshine, there the invalid may always have a pleasant promenade, with shade or shelter, from one end of Algiers to the other. There is also an exposition of native industry and produce, a museum, a Roman Catholic and a French Protestant church, a Jews' synagogue, and the hanging gardens of Marengo, in which the baby and invalid portion of the community do largely preponderate. But the especial interest of the visitor will be directed to the Moorish town: the square, substantial, flat-roofed houses, standing one above the other in irregular succession; the peep-holes, meant

for windows, but especially intended to exclude inquisitive eyes, fortified with strong iron grating in lieu of glass, resemble nothing so much as domestic prisons, in which, while the corsair traversed the seas in search of prey, he locked up his ladies, to guard them from harm, and to keep from his own susceptible bosom the demon of jealousy. At all events, those iron bars, and that gloomy grating over every aperture in the dead walls, look ominous, and are suggestive of many a romantic love adventure and many a tragic scene. The terrace of the house, that is to say, the flat roof, is the exclusive domain of the ladies: here, sportive and artless as children, and loosely clad in gauzy and light attire, they expect not, and they get not, the intrusion of man. But, for some time after the French had taken the city and established themselves in it, and before they were aware of the full extent of that seclusion to which the Moorish ladies were condemned, or, gallant and gay, and as conquerors disregarding a prejudice that confined such fair women to such foul thraldom, they were rash enough occasionally to mount on the roof of an un-

occupied house, and, with telescope in hand, to survey deliberately the dark-eyed beauties as they watered their roses, or sat enjoying the soft sea-breeze of their charming climate. The act proved a fatal one to many a brave young officer of the French army: the crack of the rifle was heard, and the victim was seen to topple headlong on the terrace; but none ever knew who drew the deadly trigger nor who directed the unerring ball. A peep at a fair Mauresque was held to be poor compensation for so tremendous a risk; so, for the time, the sport was abandoned.

CHAP. II.

CLIMATE.—AIR.—WATER.—COUNTRY.

About 10 o'clock on the morning of the 12th of February, 1857, when the weather in England was probably "as usual," — "first it blew, and then it snew, and then it friz, and then it thew, and then it friz again,"—a party of six English gentlemen and three ladies sat or sauntered under the shade of the orange-trees in the Grande Place at Algiers, discussing the merits and demerits of the climate. At that hour the heat of the sun was almost oppressive; parasols and umbrellas were required to aid the scanty and insufficient shade afforded by the trees; while, at the same time, contradictory though it appear, a cold air descended from the hills, and brought an occasional "creep" over the frame of the as yet unacclimatised stranger. The opinion of the

party on the climate seemed to be one on which all agreed to differ. Even the Earl of S. and his lady were not exceptions: both were charmed with a climate in which they took plenty of exercise; they ate well, slept well, and enjoyed, with thankfulness, the blessings of life. But it should be added, that both were healthy, sound, strong, temperate people; they brought no ills with them, and, with moderation and care, they anticipated none.

"I'll tell you what," said Lord S. in his plain and honest manner, "I find the air of Algiers so bracing and tonic that, if I do not check myself, I eat more than is good for me: as it is, I seldom take more than one meal a day, and I do very well upon that."

"That is its greatest objection," said his lady; "the air is too tonic; for, if you have any predisposition to sore throat or tic-doloureux, it soon brings matters to a crisis: a servant at the Hôtel d'Orient died in twelve hours from quinsy, induced and aggravated by the exciting nature of the air." A Yorkshire gentleman from Holderness, in the expression of whose countenance pulmonic suf-

fering might be traced, dissented *in toto* from this opinion. "I think," said he, "I never was in so vile a place; I have no appetite, and no energy for anything: the dampness of the air when the sun is not shining, and the dust when it is, makes me cough from morning to night: I'll not lose a day in getting away from so uncomfortable a climate." Within ten days from that date he gave proof of his sincerity by taking ship for Madeira; but, whether he there found the relief which was the object of his search, is a matter of doubt:—

"Cœlum, non animum mutant, qui trans mare currunt."

The rest of the party consisted of Mr. D., also from the North of England, and another Mr. D., who, to distinguish him from the former, received the title of "the Marabout," that being the appellation of a Mahometan priest, and he being the honorary officiating minister to the English residents at Algiers. The former was surnamed "the Profane;" not, poor fellow, that he was a worse Christian than his reverend namesake, but partly because in conversation he was a sceptic on

every proposition of which he was not the originator, and partly for the sake of antithesis. Then there was Mrs. D., the Marabout's lady, Mr. R., a barrister, Mr. E. and Lady S. V. H. The two latter were unusually clever, well-informed, observant people; their opinion, therefore, on the climate of Algiers was entitled to due weight. And what was their opinion? on the whole it was adverse to Algiers! Nevertheless, the gentleman's verdict only extended to the ill effects of the climate on infants, while the lady's was neither qualified nor exceptional. The lady maintained that the air wanted that soft soothing property so agreeable and so essential to affected lungs; that it possessed not the same healing influence for which Madeira is remarkable: while her husband, with better reason, considered that it was at once soft and bracing, appetising and restoring; and, therefore, especially suitable to weakness of the chest, and, indeed, to most cases of pulmonary disease. The Marabout's lady, whose chest was pronounced to be in a very delicate condition, was then asked for her opinion; and her answer, given with great earnestness and

truth, was thus expressed: "I feel," she said, "when I breathe the air, as if oil were poured upon my lungs;" a judgment which went far to settle the question, were it not that "the Profane" muttered aloud, "I shall eat my peck of dust before I get out of this place: I'll go to Australia next year; there are no roads there, and no deserts, consequently no dust."

Heavy and long-continued rain in the autumn had caused this to be, what the French very properly called it, an exceptional season: indeed, notwithstanding the rapid absorption of the rain, to this cause was ascribed the low and unequal temperature, which so commonly prevailed even in fine weather: an increase of rain had produced an increase of evaporation. Meteorologists and some of the oldest settlers remark that the cultivation of the land, now so assiduously managed, is followed by a fall of rain more copious than in former years; that the plantations and gardens, replete with vegetable life, attract and obtain a larger supply of water than was required by the unbroken and virgin soil. There is certainly truth in this observation; for we know that in our own colonies in North America small

lakes have been lowered, and even exhausted, by cutting down the forests by which they were surrounded, and by whose evaporating influence they had been supplied.

Exposure to the cold mists of night should be especially avoided; for no person whose respiratory organs are weak can venture to inhale the night air, in this or any other climate, without injury. To be in at sunset, and not out till at least two hours after sunrise, is a good general rule for all invalids to follow at Algiers. The Arab basks on the ground with impunity under a fierce mid-day sun; but if an Englishman were incautious enough to do so, he would probably catch the African fever; — at all events, as a stranger, and until he is thoroughly acclimatised, he should be careful not to take liberties which are only permitted to old friends. But, besides the acclimatisation, the Englishman is very apt to think he cannot be too thinly clad, indulges in duck pantaloons and light ventilating hats; while the Arab is always swathed in warm woollen attire, and carries many a yard of coarse camel's-hair rope, wound in the form of a turban, round his fine and noble

figure-head. Such a dress is protection at once against heat and cold, and, without doubt, was suggested originally by the exigencies of the climate.

It is a significant fact that consumption is comparatively unknown amongst the Arabs. Exposed as they are by day to the heat of a burning sun, and by night to the fogs of the Metidja or to the chilling winds of the snow-capped Djurdjura, subject to all the vicissitudes of a wandering wild life, houseless, comfortless, not only supporting existence, but flourishing, on fare that would starve a Dartmoor crow, it does seem remarkable that, notwithstanding these privations, they should escape a scourge that devastates so large and so fair a portion of the human race; whereas, their neighbours of the city, the Moors, the Jews, and the Turks of Algiers, engaged in embroidery and sedentary pursuits, well housed, well fed, and enjoying the advantages of a climate in which frost never frets the most delicate flower, wither under the influence of consumption, and die by dozens annually. Fresh air is of course the secret; it is, indeed, "the breath of life,"—as

with the Arab, so with the inhabitants of Russia, Sweden, and Norway, who are said to enjoy from their out-of-door habits a like immunity,—so that, whatever the climate may be, it is clear that consumption is not originated by any extreme or inequality of atmospherical variation. England and Holland are affected neither by the cold of Russia nor by the heat of Algiers, and yet they are the greatest sufferers.

It is not our object, nor do we presume to write a medical treatise on consumption; we leave that to the many able men who are especially educated and qualified for the task. But we venture, as the narrative advances, to offer, in irregular fashion, a little non-professional advice, which, if it be good, may be treated as good advice generally is treated, that is, not followed; but if bad, then rejected altogether. The father of a family in which hereditary taint is known or even suspected to exist, would be subject, in every one's opinion, to very grave imputation, if he permitted his children to adopt sedentary professions, or to acquire accomplishments at the expense of fresh air. Let him turn them out of doors to

gain their bread by the sweat of their brow, rather than bind them to the desk, the bar, or the Church. Writing, studying, painting, tailoring, and shoemaking, without much out-of-door exercise, are destructive occupations, as certain to vitiate the blood and to create tuberculous matter in hereditary subjects, as a field sown with tares is sure to produce the evil weed. Neither let mothers permit their growing daughters, for the sake of fashion, to compress their chests with unyielding bandages which prevent the due expansion of the lungs, and generate disease, if it does not already exist there. Where there is a taint in the blood, mothers must be mad to permit it. Why, in England alone, in 1838, no less than 31,090 English women died of consumption — a mortality awfully disproportionate to that of the men, and attributable in no small degree, according to the opinion of many able men, to the evil of busks and tight corsettes.

But we have wandered from our legitimate subject. To judge of the temperature of Algiers by that of the winter of 1856 and 1857 would be no fair criterion, for it has been

already said, that unusual rain characterised the season from the month of November to January; still, notwithstanding this adverse sample of weather, there was but one of the party, of which we have given a slight sketch, who, on leaving the country, did not admit that the condition of his health had been improved by a residence at Algiers. It is an observable feature of the climate, that immediately after rain has fallen, evaporation takes place rapidly, and the air at once becomes remarkably dry, bracing, and enjoyable. When the sirocco wind blows from the desert, which is of unfrequent occurrence, a certain amount of depression and languor is always felt by the invalid; but the high chain of mountains which intervene between the town of Algiers and the desert, and which in winter are usually covered with snow, screens and tempers it so pleasantly, that no evil effects whatever are felt by the general population. The east wind is rarely complained of by invalids; and of the other winds the north-west is held to be the most objectionable, as, in Arab language, "it rushes like a wild horse," and brings with it storms of rain and uncomfortable weather.

In a room without fire, fronting the south, and having the windows generally open during the day, the temperature throughout the months of February and March averaged 64°; while during the three previous months it was 63·8; 55° being the lowest range from eight in the morning to six o'clock at night.

The well-water of Algiers is tolerably good and perfectly wholesome; but when boiled for tea it leaves a thick sediment in the kettle, which is, doubtless, better there than in the stomach. By way of correcting or improving it, the medical men of the town generally recommend the addition of a little wine or brandy, when it is intended for table use. A Mahonese settler, whose farm we visited in the country, assured us he had been sixteen years in Algiers, and had never yet tasted a drop of the water; yet he was a temperate, industrious man, but feared to swallow the minute leeches with which he said the African waters abounded. An Arab, however, will lie down and drink like a horse from pools the muddy water of which a horse would not trouble himself to disturb; and apparently he does it with impunity.

The medical men of Algiers, it will be necessary to add, are in no respect inferior to the first men of France in point of education and professional skill. As to their respective merits, however, a divided opinion existed among the English residents on this as on the subject of climate. Dr. Bonello, the head of the Moorish hospital, was preferred by some, Leonard and Foley by others, while Dr. Bertram of the military hospital had his own especial admirers. The customary fee from an Englishman is five francs a visit, and ten if called in the night; and, as the tariff for a Frenchman is three and five, the above is considered handsome payment. Thus, as the French doctors dispense no medicine, the patient has the means of knowing to a fraction what he has to pay, without imposing on himself the disagreeable alternative of asking the question. If the question were asked to which of the fore-named practitioners, in a case of life and death, we should give the preference, the answer would be, without hesitation, "Bonello for our money."

The chemists are not so easily disposed of; we were all of one mind on that subject. No

English prescription, transposed into the best pharmaceutical French, was ever made up to the satisfaction of the Englishman; that is to say, the medicine was totally dissimilar in taste and *effect* from what he had been accustomed to receive from his English chemist. The charge, too, for the most trifling drug was preposterously large. Those of the residents who were homœopaths chuckled at the supposed imposition; while the discontent of the regulars burst forth in loud and angry expressions. At length a plan was hit upon by which a tolerably fair return was obtained for your money; the customer walked into the shop and simply asked for so many sous' worth of what he required; then, if the quantity were not enough, an additional expenditure of sundry sous was of course necessary; but, if at first you had a reasonable notion of the value of the drug, and put down your money accordingly, generally speaking, the justice with which you were served was not altogether unbearable. But in the case of a prescription you were wholly at their mercy; then, indeed, they dispensed the medicine and the justice of the charge with very uneven hands. For a

simple aperient draught, composed of magnesia and lemon-juice, we have known three francs demanded; on a second occasion, the customer walked into the shop, laid two francs on the counter, and asked for a similar dose, which was immediately prepared and given to him; and on a third occasion he put down one franc, and was again supplied with the same dose without comment, the *pharmacien* merely shrugging his shoulders and sweeping the money into his till — "ex uno disce omnes;" but if an exception can be made, it certainly is in favour of M. Simonet, in the Rue de la Marine, in whose shop, we will merely add, the above transaction did not take place. This is hypothetical language, and reminds us of the wonderful use of that figure by an old incumbent in the diocese of Llandaff. "I wish," said he to the witty and benevolent first Dean of Llandaff, who had walked some miles from kindness to pay him a morning visit, "I wish, Mr. Dean, that I had a biscuit in the house to offer you, for then you might be induced to take a glass of wine." This was the nearest approach to hospitality of which his soul was capable.

To the Earl of S. and Mr. V. H., whom we shall take the liberty of calling Mr. Vernon, as he dubbed "the Marabout" and "the Profane" with their titles, belongs the credit of originating the regular celebration of Divine Service on the Sabbath Day. At first the residents were invited to meet in a large room in the occupation of Mr. Vernon at the Hôtel de la Régence; but, as the congregation increased, steps were taken to ensure greater accommodation. At that time, at least four or five clergymen of the Church of England were sojourning at Algiers, but with the exception of "the Marabout," the whole were invalids, suffering from throat or chest complaints. Accordingly, whether he volunteered or whether he was requested by Mr. Vernon to officiate, certain it is, that his gratuitous services were given most cordially; and, with the kind consent of M. Coijne, the French Protestant minister, the use of a convenient chapel was forthwith placed at his disposal.

The time of service was 10 A.M., an early hour for the invalids, but still it was the only hour at which the chapel was disengaged. Nevertheless, Sunday after Sunday, it was a

pleasing sight to witness the punctuality with which every member of that congregation attended at the House of God; sick or healthy, weak or strong, every soul was there to a minute. Then the devotion and earnestness with which they gave heed to the preacher's words, or, with him, offered up their prayers to the Throne of Grace, made one hope and believe that, for His sake, in whom was no sin, the imperfect sacrifice was not an unacceptable one; and that his preaching and their hearing were not in vain. "The Marabout's" sermons had especial reference to the incidents of the week, and to the faithful manner in which the Mahometans observed the Prophet's law, even as the Rechabites had observed that of their father. In contrasting this observance with that of his own congregation, he warned them that the brighter light of the Christian would only add to his condemnation, if he was not careful to walk according to that light. "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida!"

The following story of a navy chaplain and his official dilemma is perfectly true, and the manner in which he extricated himself not a

little ingenious. Jack Vyvyan went to sea with a short stock of sermons; he had left his chest ashore, and, in fact, had only one sermon, with a lucky text, in the tail-pocket of his coat, which fortunately he brought on board with him. We say fortunately, for if Vyvyan had been offered a mitre on condition that he wrote a sermon, his chance of promotion would have been remote indeed. Well, nothing daunted, he read the prayers and preached the aforesaid sermon on seven Sundays in succession; on the eighth, the captain sent for him to his cabin, and, with a kind remonstrance, requested that Mr. Vyvyan would be good enough to give them something fresh on that day. "I am very sorry, Sir," he said, "not to comply with your request; but I have made it a principle through life always to conquer one vice before I attack another." His text was, "Swear not at all."

CHAP. III.

SUBURBS AND SCENERY. — RIDES AND RECREATION. — THE MONASTERY OF STAOUËLI.

The immediate environs of Algiers are beautiful beyond description: St. Eugène on one side and Mustapha Superior on the other, flank the city with villa and garden scenery, such as we read of in fairy tales but seldom see in reality. The surrounding hills on either side slope gradually to the blue water's edge; and on every available plateau stands a Moorish house, white and simple in itself, but adorned by the most exquisite verdure. Red geraniums in full bloom and beauty, pomegranates and myrtles, orange and citron trees, bearing at once the fruit and the flower, remind one of Aladdin's garden, in which jewels depended from the bowers, and perfume filled the air. The very rocks are

trellised with creepers in Nature's wildest form; while the vine, the fig, and the olive tree attest the cultivating care of man. Deep ravines, the work of earthquakes in former ages, descend from the mountain top to its base; these are spangled by the star of Bethlehem, the asphodel and classic acanthus, a beautiful genista, and other flowering shrubs, in which the black-cap and the nightingale find a happy retreat, and sing alternately from morning to night and night to morning; — "amant alterna camœnæ." Nor is the purling brook and busy mill wanting to complete the scene.

Some French General Wade has made capital roads, in zigzag fashion, through these beautiful valleys; and great reason have we to thank him, whoever he may be, for the many pleasant exploratory rides and picnics which we were enabled to enjoy through his instrumentality. "I think naught of a horse that kicks, if he only don't gib," said a Yorkshireman once in our hearing; and if he had seen two Arab steeds flinch from the collar (their thin skins don't like the drudgery) and back, in an omnibus filled with a party of

English ladies and gentlemen, to the very edge of a precipice, he would have found sympathetic opinions among that company: however, a passing Arab sprang from his mule, put his foot on the hind wheel, and prevented the catastrophe.

Lady S. V. H. was an artist of uncommon merit, and her sketches of "Le frais Vallon" and other places of interest, if she could ever be induced to publish them, would be a great treat to all who admire the picturesque and the beautiful. Indeed, most of the English ladies sketched admirably; and so anxious were they to carry home the striking features of the country, that they never moved without their sketch-books. This habit led Mrs. A., a very agreeable French lady who was married to an Englishman, and who talked our language imperfectly, to say, "Why, all you English ladies do design;" which, as many a true word is spoken in jest, might have been an awkward compliment.

When a lady pitches her camp-stool in Algiers, it is the signal for a crowd to collect around her. On one occasion, the Marabout's lady was busily engaged in taking the curious

Moorish houses in the Rue Benali, the tops of which lean against those on the opposite side, by way of mutual support in case of earthquake, when a huge half Giaour half Turkish face, peering over her shoulder, astonished the crowd by saying aloud, "Ces Ingleses marques tout l'Alger," implying, no doubt, that the ladies were politically employed for some mysterious purpose, as he had observed them repeatedly sketching the Casbah and the ancient fortifications of the city. However, his remark, if ill-naturedly meant, was only followed by a good-humoured laugh and a "bono Inglese!" from the Arab shoe-blacks in the rear.

The village of St. Eugène stands about a mile from Algiers, on the north side, and is washed by the waters of the Mediterranean; the detached and overhanging villas, however, extend almost to the heights of Boudjaréah, a distance of three miles from the city. The situation is so delightful that English families take houses and remain here during the whole year. Refreshing breezes from the sea and currents of air attracted by the ravines render the heat quite bearable, even in the

hottest summer. The toil-worn citizen finds in the bower-cafés of St. Eugène the same kind of recreation that the Londoner finds at Putney or Richmond; only, in lieu of skittles and porter, he gets his champoreau and piquet: both blow their clouds; but therein the Algerine has far the advantage, he indulges in the finest Smyrna tobacco or excellent cigars at one sou apiece, while the other has little choice beyond bird's-eye, black shag, or the vilest weeds.

Omnibuses, tolerably well horsed, are always waiting in the Rue Babeloued to convey the excursionist to St. Eugène, Point Pescade, or wherever he chooses to order them. They start at a moment's notice, and take the chance of picking up passengers *en route*. The fare to St. Eugène is only five sous, and the little Arab horses frequently gallop at speed over the whole distance. The ready and available accommodation afforded by these *voitures* to all classes is worthy of notice, and the visitor has only to cast his eye on the strange and picturesque assemblage which they sometimes contain to be assured of their general popularity. For instance: — on the

box in front may be seen the Mahonese driver with a nigger woman, wrapped in a blue bed-gown, sitting erect by his side, and grinning with delight at the pace with which the steeds are travelling; while next to her is a Moorish fisherman, with a bamboo rod thirty feet long, going to Point Pescade to entrap red mullet and rock-whiting. The interior is not, as an English omnibus would be, packed like a barrel of sardines, but there is ample room for all. A gay French lady, with a hoop *à la Pompadour*, sits comfortably by the side of a Bedouin Arab in his solemn bornous, while opposite to him is a fair Mauresque, whose pair of bright and beautiful eyes are alone visible, but which, shining like stars, are quite sufficient to remind him of that heaven which is promised to the faithful. Again, a Turk, an Englishman, two officers of the Chasseurs d'Afrique, and an ex-bedchamber lady to one of the queens of England—still a remarkably handsome and dignified specimen of the English aristocracy, and once the greatest beauty of her day—comprise a party which we have not imagined but seen in an omnibus at Algiers. And here it may be as well to

mention, that *voitures* capable of containing four persons, with a pair of Arab horses, can be hired at all times for two francs an hour, and a good saddle-horse for four francs a ride, or six francs a day for a journey. For the conveyance of a party to a distance of eight leagues, twenty English miles, and to return with it on the same day, the charge for an omnibus with three horses abreast is twenty francs, which sum includes every expense. Any dispute with a driver is disposed of in the most summary manner by the Commissary of Police, who, in a case of extortion or impertinence, has the power to suspend him from his duties for a week or two; and this power is not unfrequently exercised by that useful functionary. The process is a very simple one: — take your witness with you to the Police Centrale, lodge your complaint, and you may depend that justice will follow forthwith, without any further trouble on your part. It ensures wonderful civility towards the public from a set of men who are notoriously a difficult class to manage all over the world.

No one should be a week at Algiers without mounting the hill to Boudjaréah; it is a short

but charming ride for an afternoon, and presents the most extensive and the finest view in Algeria. When the atmosphere is clear, the whole distance of the Metidja plain, ninety miles in length, is distinctly seen; several of the principal towns of the Province lying beyond the plain, on the edge of the little Atlas and the great Kabyle mountains; Sidi Ferruch, where the French first landed; Staouëli, where they fought their battle, and where the Trappists' peaceful monastery is now established; the line of march followed by the victorious French army; the ancient Casbah, and the fair city at its feet, are all visible to the naked eye. Then, if you turn to seawards, there is the blue Mediterranean, with Fort-de-l'Eau, Cape Matifoux, and other objects of interest and beauty in the distance. The view must be seen to be appreciated, for it is impossible for pen or pencil adequately to describe it.

Close to the port of Bab-el-oued, on the road to St. Eugène, are the hanging gardens of Marengo. Gravelled terraces, raised one above the other, the borders of which are fringed with flowers or planted with the

bel-ombre and other shade-giving trees, afford an attractive promenade for the inhabitants of Algiers. Being so contiguous to the city, they are available on all occasions; and those who are incapable of going to a farther distance or bearing long exercise, are often able to enjoy the refreshing sea-breeze and lovely view obtainable from this pleasant retreat. The gardens are furnished with benches, and on Sunday evenings a large concourse of well-dressed people "of every nation under heaven" meet together to listen to the music of a military band: and a more orderly and well-conducted assembly it is difficult to conceive. A queer old character, a sort of Jack-o'-the-green, presides over a table of oranges and sherbet, under the shade of a bel-ombre, and acts as a kind of Cerberus to protect the fruit and flowers from the youthful marauders who frequent the garden. Within a few yards of his stall he has his own pet border of early flowers, and, if you desire a sprig of the same, a sou for a cigar or two sous for a glass of sherbet is always an effective sop for the purpose. He literally lives under the bel-ombre, and yet he cannot speak well of it:

"This tree," said he, "is little better than a mushroom; it was brought here from America, and, like that country, in a few years it has become what you see it, a little giant; the timber is worthless, the fruit tasteless, and the shade—bah!—that does for hot weather; but the leaves are served up for spinach in every hotel in Algiers; and then when it arrives at maturity it will decay like a pear: so the tree is not to be trusted in any form." We once knew a man whose turn of mind was not unlike that of the bel-ombrist; he rode some of the best horses in the West of England, and rode them well too, but the better his horse carried him the more he abused him to everybody: "I never rode a bigger brute; he'll do to the end of the season, and then he goes."

Like Ulysses and his host—

> "He ate his mutton, drank his wine,
> And *then* he poked his eye out."

On the south side of Algiers, in the centre and deepest part of that beautiful bay, Mustapha Superior and Inferior occupy a prominent position; the latter extends nearly from the port of Babazoun to the distance of a

league from the city, and is composed of streets, parades, shops, cafés, and drinking houses of every description, built and inhabited by the French. The plain of Mustapha is particularly well-suited for cavalry purposes, and here military evolutions are performed, recruits drilled, and young horses trained without cessation; it is also used for races, and, if the turf were better kept, it would be a remarkably fine course. The Arabs are devoted to horse-racing; and annually, by the aid of the French government, a charming day's amusement is afforded to them and the public by the exhibition of their favourite pastime. The best horse wins here: a revival of the deyship and the presentation of it to one of the Arab riders would not bribe him to sell a race. So the spectator, if he takes an interest in such matters, may look on and admire the picturesque figures standing erect in their embroidered and high-backed saddles, or straining in their stirrups and urging their steeds on to victory; with a conviction that no foul play will disgrace the struggle, and no book-work interfere with the fair result of honest competition. This is sport indeed!

The hill on which Mustapha Superior rests describes a curvilinear sweep, after the form of the bay; it overhangs the plain, and consequently commands a noble view of the race-course, the blue sea, and the distant mountains of Kabylia; its situation is that of a perfect amphitheatre; mauresque mansions of considerable size and great interior beauty, afford on these hills a cool summer retreat to the wealthy citizens of Algiers. The Governor-General, General Yussuf, and other high officers in command, have also their country seats in this favoured locality. To those who desire a permanent dwelling-house, and who intend to keep what is called a regular establishment, no situation could be more delightful, none more desirable than that of upper Mustapha. But if the means of doing so are not at hand, or if a mere temporary residence is only required, then the market and hotels are too distant for convenience, and the visitor would find himself better off in Algiers.

A party of English gentlemen, one of whom was a bright luminary of the House of Commons, J.B., took a mansion on a very elevated spot in this district. The senator, however, un-

derstood less of domestic than political economy, and was more at home in the management of public business than in that of his own. The dragoman, to whom they had intrusted the charge of the home department, had studied neither the laws of comfort nor finance; at all events, by abusing the one and not supplying the other, he had not practised them to the satisfaction of his employers. Heavy rain fell in the late autumn of 1856; the house was far from air-tight, *au contraire*, plenty of oxygen was an object contemplated by its structure; and, consequently, in stormy weather, the damp air whistled through it as though it were a wind-mill, and the walls reeked with moisture. The house was therefore abandoned, the dragoman dismissed, and the party broke up in despair: one went into a comfortable hotel in Algiers, while the senator turned his back upon it and the country, took ship, and sailed for a happier clime.

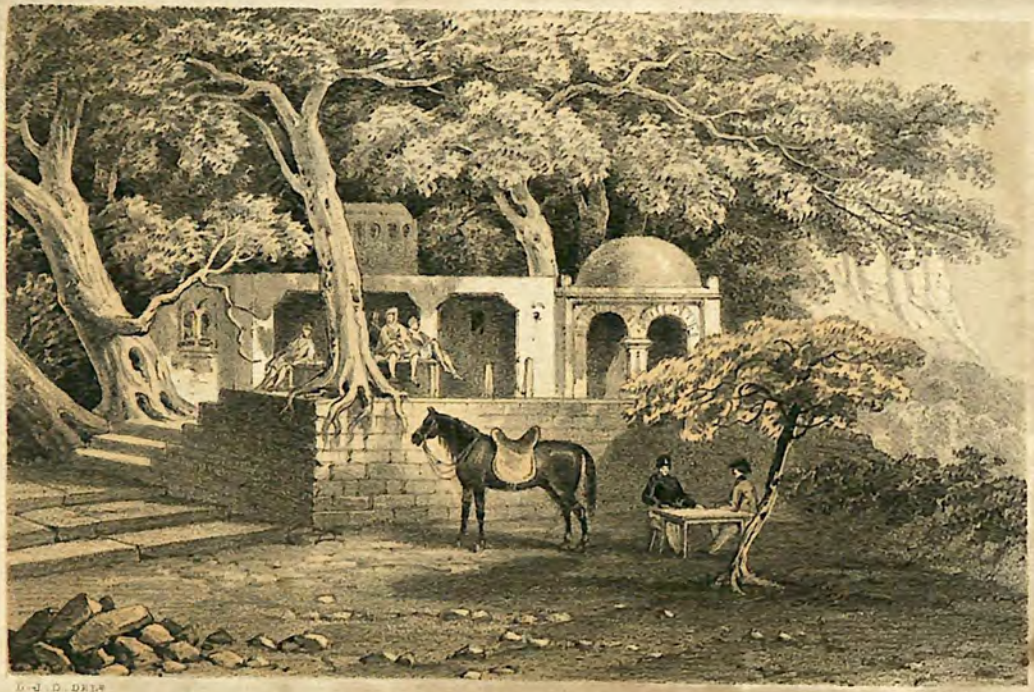
Although so contiguous to each other, there is a great difference in the climate of the two Mustaphas; on the hill side the air is light and invigorating, while that on the low ground,

especially near the sea-shore, is depressing and unhealthy. Vegetation of a rank and marshy character exhibits itself in every uncultivated corner, and low fever is not of uncommon occurrence. So well known is this to the inhabitants of Algiers, that they who possess houses in this locality prefer letting them at a small rent to occupying them as sea-side or summer residences. The ground, however, has not been much built upon; but is cultivated by market gardeners, principally Mahonese settlers; and to their purpose, from the rich alluvial nature of the soil and the facilities of water, it is remarkably well suited. In general, the vegetables produced here are not only larger but of far better quality than those of the same kind produced in England: artichokes, however, which are extensively grown, are an exception; they are both less in size and inferior in flavour to our artichokes. The Spaniards and French often eat them uncooked, and seem to relish them much in that crude and indigestible state.

Between Mustapha and Hussein Dey, at a distance of only three miles from Algiers, is the famous Jardin d'Essai, established as a

trial garden for the benefit of the colonists by the French government, and now under the able superintendence of M. Hardy; as the name implies, its object is to test the applicability of the climate to those exotic plants which are likely to be useful to the colony, and to discover what soil and management are best suited to their proper cultivation. The inhabitants of Algiers are fortunate in having so pleasant a lounge within such easy reach of their thronged and busy city; peaceful, shady, and instructive, these gardens present features of interest to every class of visitors. The man of business jumps into an omnibus at the porte of Babazoun; in twenty minutes he is sitting at the entrance of the garden under some mighty plane-trees, smoking his cigar and imbibing a cup of Moorish coffee, and the furrow of care and thought disappears from his brow. The man of gay and idle habits finds at least innocent recreation in these bowers, and is refreshed by the change. The botanist has so extensive a field of natural science before him, that he may spend a life in it without exhausting its resources. Lastly, the invalid will be amused,

if not benefited, by a stroll among the curious and beautiful flowers which abound in the borders; and will marvel at the industry and science displayed by the director, who has classified and described by its proper botanical name every tree and plant throughout the garden. A fine young avenue of date-palm trees, with the fruit on the female tree in various stages of advancement, is an object of great attraction to the European visitor. The wealth of the Arabs is gauged by these trees, and according to the number possessed by a tribe, so does it pay tribute to the government. The diœcious nature of the date-palm is so well understood by the Arabs of the desert, that if the female is separated from the male tree by a long distance, too long for the bees to do the necessary work of impregnation, they climb the trees and bear the pollen of the one to the flower of the other, and thus ensure its fecundity. Not only is the date a most nutritious and wholesome food for man, but it will support and fatten camels and cattle of every description; the horse soon becomes very fond of it. The banana, which in hot countries furnishes food to the greater part of



L. J. D. DEL.

HARRART, LITH.

CAFÉ MAURE

mankind; the Barbary medlar, a vast variety of fruit and forest trees, India-rubber and cork trees, at least thirty different kinds of cactus, canes, aloes, ixias, irises, and orchidaceous plants of surpassing beauty, astonish and delight the beholder.

Several acres of ground are especially devoted to the cultivation of the cactus cochenillifera, on which the insect which constitutes cochineal feeds and exists. It is planted in long rows, at a distance of six feet apart, and those rows on which the insects swarm are covered by matting to protect them from bad weather; when feeding upon the cactus-leaf, the insects look like so many dried currants floured over, and ready for a mince-pie, but if they were popped into it they would probably be not so palatable. Already it has been pretty well ascertained that the climate is not adapted to the production of cochineal, so England must get the colour for her "red jackets" and "bit of pink" for the hunting-field from some older colony. Soldiers under punishment do the heavy labour of the garden, new roads and public works are also constructed by the same hands; thus their penal exer-

cise is turned to account, and moral as well as material improvements are executed, not only without expense, but with great advantage, both to the country and the delinquents.

The Maison Carrée is another object of interest to the visitor at Algiers, and being only at 3 leagues, or 7½ miles, distance, it is very accessible for a morning ride. A fine old Roman bridge, firm as it was a thousand years ago, crosses the rapid stream below this hamlet, every house of which is an *auberge;* and above it stands a huge pile of fortified barracks, which are now used as a kind of county prison in which Arabs alone are confined. The command of the river, as well as a complete view of the Metidja plain, are the advantages which this prison, or fort, or watchtower obtains from the well-selected spot on which it has been raised. Among the wayside conveniences of the country may be mentioned the numbers of capacious stone tanks, into which a cool stream of well water is perpetually flowing, which have been constructed by the French throughout Algeria. There is one of large dimensions at the Maison Carrée, and a pleasant sight it is to see a company of travelling Arabs,

high-mounted on their camels, descend to refresh themselves with this simple luxury. No waterman ever pulled at a pot of Barclay and Perkins' best London stout with a heartier draught than the thirsty Arab at these delicious fountains. To say nothing of the comfort afforded to the public by their construction, it was a stroke of strong political wisdom which provided the Mahometan population with abundant wells of water*, which

* "The official report of General Desvaux on the Artesian borings executed in the Sahara of the Province of Constantine in 1856–7 has just been published by the 'Moniteur Algérien,' and is not without interest. A civil engineer, a sergeant of Spahis, and a detachment of soldiers of the Foreign Legion, suffice for the work, which commenced early in May, 1856, in an oasis of the Oued-Rir. This first essay was most successful. On the 19th of June a perfect river, yielding 4010 quarts of water per minute, at a temperature of 21°, burst from the bowels of the earth. The joy of the Arabs was indescribable. The news of this miraculous gush of water, so precious in the desert, spread rapidly through the country. People came from afar to see the spring, to which the Maraboots, with solemn ceremonies, gave the name of the 'Fountain of Peace.' The soldiers who had wrought the seeming miracle returned to Biscara without a single sick man, although during the period of their labours the centigrade thermometer had often marked 460 in the shade. Two other borings were also successful, but the

they consider as indispensable to the offices of their religion as it is to the comfort and support of life.

Exactly twelve miles by land, eight miles by water, and in front of Algiers, across the bay,

supply of water was much less abundant, the first of the two wells, which received the name of 'Fountain of the Benediction,' yielding only .35 quarts a minute from a depth of 84 metres; the second 120 quarts at the depth of 58 metres. The gratitude of the Arabs knew no bounds, and they showed the most friendly feeling towards the slender detachment of soldiers, who lived amongst them for weeks and months together, at long distances from the French garrisons. In the oasis of Sidi-Rached, which was totally unproductive for want of water, an Artesian well, known as the 'Fountain of Gratitude,' yields, at the depth of 54 metres, no less than 4300 quarts of water per minute. When the shouts of the soldiers announced the gush, the Arabs sprang in crowds to the spot, laving themselves in the welcome abundance, into which mothers dipped their children, while the old sheikh fell upon his knees and wept, and returned thanks to Allah and the French. At Oum-Thiour, a well sunk to the depth of 170 metres, and yielding 180 quarts a minute, was at once taken as the centre of a settlement by a portion of a previously nomadic tribe. As soon as the water appeared, they began the construction of a village, and the plantation of 1200 date-trees, and entirely renounced their wandering existence. According to General Desvaux's report, these Artesian wells are likely to have a most important influence on Arab life, and greatly to subdue the roaming propensities of many of the tribes."

is situated the small Spanish village of Fort-de-l'Eau: In the year 1850 a grant of twenty acres of land, close upon the rock, and bristling with brush-wood, was made to fifty Mahonese families, who undertook to build houses for themselves, and to clear and cultivate the land. All this has been admirably done by the industrious and temperate settlers; the houses are models of neatness, while the land smiles like a garden. One secret may be told (pity it should be a secret) which has retarded neither the work nor the welfare of this thriving little community. Unlike the French villages, where almost every house mounts the sign of "débit de vins et liqueurs," at Fort-de-l'Eau there is not a single *auberge*, not a ruination-shop in the whole village. Birmandreis, Birkadem, Kouba, El-biar, Ben-aknoun, Dely-Ibrahim, Cheragas and Staouëli, are all within easy distance of the city, and are, most of them, villages so picturesque and so interesting that a ride to any of them is indeed a charming day's recreation. Blidah, "the beautiful," with its orange groves, Gorges de la Chiffa, and magnificent vale and mountain scenery, is beyond a day's work from Algiers;

but every one who has seen it agrees with the praise bestowed upon it by the Arab chief: "Some call thee a city," said he, "but I call thee a beautiful rose." A mere sketch of the most attractive places within easy access of Algiers is the object of our quill; the sketch would be incomplete, as well as rough, if a few additional strokes, descriptive of Staouëli, were omitted from the picture.

Staouëli.

At a distance of eighteen kilometres, or less than twelve English miles from Algiers, on the road to Koleah, stands the grand monastery of La Trappe, consecrated in 1845, containing ninety brethren of that society, and presided over by P. Marie François Régis, Abbé de Staouëli. It is situated on a wide plain, on which the palmetta grows in luxuriance, and which, from its high and airy elevation, would be selected as the spot of all others where rude health might be enjoyed. But until it was well drained by the indefatigable monks, it was found to be far otherwise; miasmatic

vapours prevailed alarmingly, and these, aided by the rigorous and self-denying diet of the monks, carried them off in vast numbers. At present, however, to judge by their ruddy faces, and indeed by their own account of the place, it is as healthy as any part of the world.

The severity of the order of La Trappe is too well known to need description; still the reality of their discipline was far exceeded by the imaginary penance to which they were subjected by the good people of Algiers. We were gravely told that bread and water was their sole diet; that they scourged themselves with whips and thorns in a frightful manner; that no woman was admitted within their territory; and, finally, that they slept each man in his own stone coffin at night; and thus hoped by the pains of the body to atone for the sins of the soul. The establishment at Staouëli is sufficiently remarkable in its features to require no surreptitious aid to render it an object of the deepest interest to every thinking mind; and it is impossible for any one to visit it without pleasure and advantage to himself. Mr. Vernon was good

enough to propose that we should take the Koleah diligence at six in the morning, and spend the day together at Staouëli; and this led to a visit, the recollections of which it gives us much happiness to record.

The monastery is a plain square building, distinguished by no architectural pretension whatever; it has an open quadrangle in the centre, which is ornamented by many curious flowers, orange-trees in full bearing, and a fountain of clear and beautiful water, in which gold and silver fish flourish and sport in their element. Spacious out-buildings, intended for farm and other purposes, are attached to the monastery; while outside of these a high wall, encompassing a hundred acres of garden, vineyard, orchards, and cemetery, surrounds the home enclosure. Beyond this again the cultivated farm encircles the whole in a ring fence; by the produce of which the establishment is maintained, and the simple wants of the brotherhood amply supplied.

The monk who received us at the porter's lodge, and who, as guest-master, alone spoke, whispered a kind welcome, and invited us to breakfast at the hour of eleven. At that

moment Mr. Vernon produced a beautiful hoopoe which he had just shot; the monk took the dead bird gently in his hand, and kissing it, said, in a feeling voice, "This at least was innocent." The library, to which he at once conducted us, was worthy of little notice; it contained neither manuscripts nor books of any especial merit: even Vernon's sharp eye could discover nothing beyond a large work on agriculture, which, from its well-thumbed condition, seemed to be an object of much interest to the brotherhood. The next point was the chapel; twenty monks were here on their knees, praying or doing penance for their sins; never was devotion more fervent or fixed than theirs appeared to be; not an eye was lifted nor a muscle moved to indicate that our presence distracted their thoughts; body and soul were engaged together profoundly in the great work of adoration. The contemplation of this solemn scene has left its impression on our memories; and we pray for abstraction in prayer like that of the monks of Staouëli. A table of service, suspended on a wall, showed what were the religious duties appointed for each day in the week; and then

followed the names of the brethren who were required to perform them; thus, twenty were marked to pray for the conversion of the Arabs and all heretics; fifteen to pray against swearing and all other sins; ten on purgatory, and so forth. We then mounted to a long well-ventilated dormitory; and here we saw not the stone coffins referred to, but a number of well-arranged pallets, each in its own little compartment, with the name of the occupant inscribed over the door.

The monks who were not marked for religious service were engaged in all kinds of domestic and industrial labour; some were digging, others hoeing, ploughing, looking after the oxen, working at the anvil, mixing mortar, watching the corn, baking, turning, and all other occupations which served to support the temporal and natural wants of the fraternity. A solemn stillness pervaded the whole establishment; the very bell sounded as if it was muffled; the anvil rang not but vibrated dully beneath the heavy sledge of the Trappist; our guide preceded us in list shoes, and, although privileged to do so, never spoke above a whisper. A handsome

and venerable monk, as he worked at his lathe silently and incessantly, converting the shapeless palmetta berry into a beautiful polished bead, only smiled and shook his head good-naturedly at the inquiries which, forgetting his vows (a venial forgetfulness, if not an intentional one), we occasionally put to him. Then, at parting, to show he was not vexed by our curiosity, he extended his hand and presented us with many specimens of his exquisite skill and labour.

Our curiosity as to the silent system, the self-reformatory character of their penance, and their monastic life in general, prompted us to examine the expression of the monks' faces, the title-page of the human heart. But there we could trace none of the marks of care, none of the turmoil of the world; their mild smiling countenances, as they nodded to us in the midst of their work, and worked on, but spoke never a word, indicated nothing but rest and sweet contentment. They had been doubtless men of like passions with ourselves; but unquestionably repentance had brought peace, and peace had given joy to the face as well as to the heart. Let us add our convic-

tion that it was that peace "which passeth all understanding" which these men so unmistakeably enjoyed.

But breakfast was announced, and as Vernon and the writer had taken a long walk, besides their journey by *diligence*, they were both sharpened for the work. Nothing could be simpler than the table and its arrangements for the monks' own breakfast; a high table, with its daïs, alone marked the distinction between the superior and the brethren. The breakfast served to us was excellent; every dish was home-grown or home-made; soup, rice-porridge flavoured with savoury herbs, an omelet, fried potatoes, cheese and butter, than which we had tasted none so good since we left our native hills; with raisins, figs, almonds, oranges, and sound wine of a Bordeaux character for dessert. During the repast, our friendly guide stood at a kind of sideboard, and read a long homily on the hospitable duties of Christians in general and guests in particular; but we confess we were too much occupied to pay proper attention to its salutary injunctions. The room in which we breakfasted was one which is always appro-

priated to the use of strangers, while above it were two or three comfortable bed-rooms, expressly prepared for the same hospitable purpose.

Our next object, after breakfast, was to look over the farm, and to see how they practised the doctrine taught by the big book in the library. The crops of wheat were the most favoured of the cereals, and were in strong and promising condition; but the seed had been broad-cast, and, whether from rabbits or bad sowing, presented a somewhat patchy appearance. The barley was thin, and scarcely covered the nakedness of the land; but the vines, which occupied at least forty acres, seemed to be thriving, and, from the clean and well-hoed furrows, gave every indication of good management. The grape-blight, oïdium tuckeri, for which sulphur is proved to be a specific, had committed no ravages here. The artificial grass, for the land had not long been "laid down," was excellent; the fences, however, were our especial admiration, and were such as Capt. Lamb's old "Vivian," or Lord Waterford's "The Switcher," would alone have faced. They were thus formed: outside, a row of the cross-thorn acacia, then a row of aloes,

then one of prickly pear, and then a broad ditch; a vegetable chevaux-de-frise, and a terrible fence to cross under any circumstances. The cattle, in point of size, were finer than any we had yet seen in Algeria; but they were coarse, mouse-coloured beasts, large in bone and rough in their skins; Vernon, however, suggested that probably a thick hairy jacket was a great advantage in a country infested by mosquitoes and the much-dreaded œstrus, to which the monk bowed his assent. Cocks and hens, for the omelets, swarmed in the farm-yard; there were also a few long-legged pigs, and a capital heap of old stable-manure, which a monk was forking over at that very time. Also, at different points of the farm, there were corn-mills with overshot wheels, aqueducts, reservoirs, a bath-house, and lastly, lime-kilns, which they burned with the wild olive instead of coal, and the quality of the lime was excellent.

The last object of attraction was the cemetery: but here were no epitaphs, no costly sculpture to record the great deeds of the dead; and, with one exception, not even an inscription over a grave to denote its occupant.

A few cypresses and a plain stone slab were the sole ornaments of this simple spot; the latter told the reader, in a few words, that the tomb beneath contained the remains of the Vicar of Algiers, who, valuing his friends the Trappists, had wished to be near them even in death.

The society of La Trappe at Staouëli is said to include men of all ranks among its members, from the highest noble of France to the humblest peasant; from the general and staff officer to the private soldier of the French army. A very interesting story * is told of a wounded Zouave, who presented himself for admission within its sanctuary; and Horace Vernet has immortalised the subject by a picture of touching effect, which may now be seen in the Palais de l'Industrie, at Paris. "I am a wounded soldier," said he to the Superior; "and here is my discharge, signed by the colonel of my regiment. I am only now recovering from a long and painful illness, occasioned by my wounds; and I vowed, if I recovered, to devote my life to God: receive

* The substance of it appeared in the *Times* newspaper.

me, then, into your community." The Superior, affected by the man's earnestness, replied: "Attend to-morrow in the chapel, and if your credentials are satisfactory, I will bring the case before my brethren." The day came, and when all were assembled within the sacred walls, the Superior rose and, pointing to the Zouave on his knees, said: "Brethren, behold a man who desires admission into our fold: he is at once a wolf and a coward; he has disgraced himself as a soldier, and would now disgrace us by belonging to our community: will you receive such a man amongst you?" A deep silence followed; tears were seen to fall from the soldier's cheeks; the congregation parted, and left him alone on his knees. The next morning the brethren again met: the soldier had passed the night in prayer, and the Superior, approaching him, said: "Brethren, here is a soldier who is the bravest of the brave, and a true Christian; he has endured the worst slander without a murmur, and the greatest danger without fear: we will admit him into our community." For four years he was a happy inmate of that peaceful abode; when the wound on his forehead opening

afresh, he was suddenly carried off to the mansions of eternal peace and rest; but, long before his death, the honour of bearing the cross at the head of their community was conferred upon him as a reward for his distinguished faith and piety.

On leaving the monastery we were glad to obtain, at a small price, a few trinkets and specimens of workmanship as souvenirs of the monks' ingenuity: the chaplets of palmetta berries, for instance, were convertible, with very little trouble, into handsome bracelets, and served at once to remind us of the country as well as the hands that wrought them. We thanked our guide for the kind and hospitable manner in which we had been received; while he courteously replied that, as married ladies with their husbands were not excluded from their hospitalities, he hoped we would not forget to bring ours with us the next time we visited Staouëli.

CHAP. IV.

SOCIETY. — NATIVE POPULATION.

THE colour of the human face at Algiers is not more varied than that of its society: the gradations of sets and cliques among the military and government *employés*, clergy, consuls, merchants, and citizens of every denomination being as numerous as they are in any other town of similar heterogeneous character. The Governor-General of Algeria, Marshal Randon, and his lady occupy the first rank, and do the honours for the government of which he is the chief representative. Receptions take place at certain intervals, and if a visitor aspire to a presentation, he had better provide himself with a direct letter of introduction to the Governor-general before he arrives at Algiers. Otherwise, if he expect the *entrée* through the usual channel, the

Consul of his country*, he will probably encounter a difficulty: "the Comtesse de Randon's reception-rooms are limited in size, and the admission of strangers must be regulated accordingly." In these days of hoop and circle, small rooms are decidedly inconvenient: at Algiers a corresponding expansion in the latter would be an act of gallantry worthy of imperial consideration.

The Prefect's parties were admitted on all sides to be particularly agreeable. A ball at the Prefecture happened to be given just when H.M.S. the "Dauntless" touched at Algiers: the captain and officers received a prompt invitation, and in honour of the British flag, the "Lancers" was the popular dance of the night, while champagne flowed in streams, and nearly carried a lively midshipman off his legs. A French gentleman present, whose

* H.B.M.'s Consul-General of Algeria is Mr. John Bell, than whom there cannot be a more obliging public officer. He is, however, officially bound to convey the expression of Madame Randon's difficulties to his fellow-countrymen. Mr. Elmore, the Vice-Consul at Algiers, is an active, intelligent man: he is well acquainted with the colony, and is always ready and willing to give information that may be useful to the Algerine traveller.

head of hair was unusually rough and grand, would have helped the young sailor even to more wine; but he wisely declined, and patting the other on the back, said: "If I took it from any one, old fellow, it would be from you, for I never saw any one before so like the British lion." The French are fond of "pleasantry," and the remark, although somewhat personal, but singularly applicable, created immense entertainment.

There is scarcely a night in the seven days of the week in which some private ball or exhibition does not take place; but, exclusive of these, there will be no lack of quiet and rational amusement to the English visitor at Algiers. Besides the charming rides and walks of which we have already spoken, there are boats always ready for water excursions: there is the town and population to be considered, the museum, and the exposition of native industry. A man need not be an artist to enjoy the scene living and moving on the Place Royale; figures as varying and new to him as those of a kaleidoscope are presented to his delighted gaze whichever way he turns it. The picture is a perpetual feast to

the eye: men of all countries meet here at all hours of the day, clad in every imaginable costume, from the garb of Old Gaul to that of the Faubourg St. Honoré, from the bornous of the Sahara to the cocked-hat and epaulets of martial France. Here may be seen Grand Turks whose heads are surmounted by turbans as broad as their shoulders; Muftis or Mahometan judges buried in the endless folds of their white head-gear, which, from its evenness and precision, resembles a mighty cotton-ball wrought and wound in Manchester; the Algerine Jew in his purple and gold suit, with patent-leather high-heeled shoes, white stockings to the knee, and an amber-headed cane in his hand, of all coxcombs the greatest; princes of the land, with hewers of wood and drawers of water; French ladies in the last full fashion of the Parisian season; negresses in a cotton wrap of scrimpy dimensions, with unclad picaninies slung and pouched like young 'possums at their back; and, lastly, fair Mauresques, enveloped in snowy attire, who, were it not for the beautiful eyes whose sparkle cannot be veiled, might be mistaken for ghosts passing to and fro silently and

mysteriously among the human crowd, but taking no part in its affairs.

Amid this motley group you seat yourself under the shade of an orange-tree, and a venerable Moor, whose beard and benign countenance might aptly represent that of Father Abraham, and whose garb is that of Dives himself, places himself by your side, tucks up his legs, and in the enjoyment of a pipe, seeks to forget the hardships of his fallen race. The Arab of the desert and the Kabyle of the mountains are lying at full length on the ground within a few yards of you, and display a set of limbs worthy of Hercules himself. Suddenly a sound strikes on the ear which attracts their earnest attention: the Arab and the Kabyle spring to their legs, and the Moor, lowering his pipe, blows out a last whiff in deference to the call. It is the cry of the Muezzin summoning the faithful to prayer: and if ever a Mussulman is roused from his habitual lethargy, it is to obey the law of his Prophet,—he washes in haste and hurries to the mosque. Five times during the night and day the Muezzin mount the minarets, and in a loud sonorous tone proclaim the hour of

prayer.* Men of strong lungs are selected for the office, and far and wide over the city is the sound heard, like that of a tenor bell,—

> "Swinging slow with solemn roar,
> Over some wide-watered shore."

In the stillness of night the invitation to worship God falls on the stranger's ear with most impressive effect, for the sound, if it waken the sleeper, will awaken his conscience as well. He hears the Mussulman pattering in the dark street on his way to the mosque, and then his thoughts turn inwards,—"How do *I* serve God?" The comparison, if it do not make him a better man, will only add to his condemnation; the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon will take precedence of him on the last great day, "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required."

After three centuries of piracy, from the time of the desperate Barbarossa, in 1517, to the bombardment of Algiers by Lord

* "To prayer—to prayer! God is the one God. To prayer — to prayer! Mohammed is the prophet of God. To prayer — to prayer! Time is flying from you. To prayer—to prayer! Judgment is drawing nigh to you."

Exmouth, in 1816; after the commission of crimes of a catholic character, which consigned all Christians, captured and brought to Algiers, to the most cruel slavery, and by which all Europe was more or less affected, the downfal of the Turks in Algeria was hailed with delight by the whole civilised world. In 1830 a petty insult offered by Hussein, the last Dey, to M. Deval, Consul of France, brought the long list of grievances to a close. The Dey slapped him in the face with his fan at a public reception; upon which the consul withdrew in anger, and, in the name of his government, demanded an apology: this being refused, the French landed an army at Sidi Ferruch, and, with that promptitude which marks their character, conquered the country and swept every vestige of Turkish tyranny from the stronghold it had so long occupied: the civilisation of the world gained a step by the victory.

Soon after this event, the Turks, the long-dreaded tyrants of the town and the scourges of the sea, sold their possessions at a great loss, and withdrew in numbers to Alexandria and Tunis; but, by intermarrying with the

native women, they left behind them a mixed people, called Koulouglis, who, as specimens of manhood, are remarkable for their handsome features and noble deportment. These, with a small remnant of veritable Turks, are now the sole representatives of the once dominant race at Algiers. Of the latter, a fine dignified Turk, is the Prince Mohammed Mustapha Pasha, son of the last Dey; but his grand turban and splendid dress do not take from his countenance an expression which tells you unmistakeably that he has seen better days. The hospitable and sumptuous manner in which he entertained the French princes, sons of Louis-Philippe, who lived with the prince when they came to Algiers, and the subsequent non-fulfilment of his hope with respect to the governorship of Algeria, not only brought disappointment but led to his serious embarrassment. It is said, however, that although he chose to live like a prince, his resources were never equal to the expenditure. He takes a friendly interest in our countrymen, and thinks, from the manner in which we prosecuted the late war against Russia, that the gratitude of all Turks is due to us for ever.

In a social and moral point of view, the Turk of Algiers is an improved character; unlike his predecessors, he is no longer a polygamist, indulging in harems and concomitant abominations, but is the husband of one wife, and a respectable member of society. The ladies of a family generally live together, mother, wife, and sisters; but we are assured, on good authority, that no such thing as a harem exists at present at Algiers. With one wife, however, the Turk is a jealous man; no eye is allowed to penetrate, no foot to tread, the inner courts of his house: it is literally his castle; no matter how friendly you may be with him, if you approach it, even with your wife on your arm, she is admitted, but you are excluded from its portals. In some Turkish houses there is a kind of outer hall, which they call "skiffa," and thus far a gentleman visitor is sometimes permitted to enter, and receive the hospitalities of the mansion.

A visit was occasionally paid by the English ladies to the Turkish families residing at Mustapha Superior: a peep behind the curtain was thus obtained, and both parties were mutually gratified. Bon-bons and confection-

ery were a welcome present, and, indeed, seemed to be expected by the Turkish ladies, so of course they were never forgotten; and, on the other hand, they made good coffee for their guests, painted their eyelids and tinged their nails with henna, and were never tired of examining the English dresses and costume: the crinoline, or rather the new steel cage, was an object of especial wonder and amusement to them. On one of these occasions the Marabout's lady wore a brooch on which a copy of the Chandos Shakspeare was beautifully executed; the manly face attracted the Turkish ladies' attention, and, by many playful signs and indications, they made her understand that the portrait represented her husband (umbra), but that she did not wear it in the right place. Accordingly, they contrived to unpin it, and then refastened it over her heart. There were at least twelve ladies in this family, the wives of three brothers, the mother and sisters, and several young children. All sat in a circle on the floor in a large apartment which was well carpeted, but contained neither table nor chair of any description. A picturesque looking-glass hung

against a wall, and if its value could be estimated by the frequency with which it was used, it would certainly be a precious article; the adjustment of the hair and of the splendid diamonds with which it was interlaced, was the cause of perpetual visits to this queer old mirror. The young ladies were all good-looking, two of the wives not above sixteen, great beauties; their complexions were as clear as those of an English lady; the colour of the hair auburn or black; the eyes large, dark, and lustrous; the nose and mouth small, delicate, and well defined; in manner playful and simple as children, not an air nor a grace did they assume which was not the gift of nature. The veil to them is almost what dignity is to an English lady; when in the privacy of a home circle, that is removed, cold reserve is banished, and the natural woman shines forth in all her simplicity and elegance. It happened on this occasion that a sweet child belonging to the least pretty of the married ladies was very ill; the distress of the poor mother was most touching as she pressed the infant to her bosom, and seemed to seek for help in vain. What could be done

to arrest the fever?—the presence of a medical man among the Turkish ladies would have been regarded as the intrusion of a Giaour, a thing not to be proposed; so she looked imploringly at the English ladies, hoping they might suggest a remedy. The Marabout's wife, ever-ready in case of distress, did not wait for a stronger appeal; her sympathy and her services, always acting in sequence, were at once devoted to the little sufferer. She felt the burning skin and the throbbing little pulse, and then hastened without a moment's delay to prescribe doses of gray-powder, which she had brought with her from England; but the remedy came too late, the child died before it could take effect.

If the law or custom of the country forbid the presence of a medical man among its female population, it certainly should be the business of the civilised French government to provide women who might be qualified by education and practice to attend to the requirements of sufferers among their own sex: the plan prevails at Paris, and in mercy should be extended to Algiers.

The Jews form so conspicuous a portion of

the inhabitants of Algiers, that a description of its population would be incomplete if it passed them over in silence. Before the conquest of the country by the French, the children of Israel were hated and oppressed alike by Turks and Moors, and even compelled to wear a dress black and distinct from the rest of the people. But at present, protected by the French government, which not only tolerates their religious opinions, but provides them with a decorous place of worship, they carry on a flourishing trade, and enjoy every social advantage which good subjects could desire. They are said to be offensively proud and mean in their mercantile transactions; but it must be borne in mind that, whenever a man is more industrious than his fellows, or is making money and taking care of it, he will always be an object of jealousy to the more careless and less successful of his neighbours. They certainly dress in gorgeous apparel on Saturdays and fête days; the women are a mass of gold and silk, and the men are bedizened with braid, and crimson and blue cloth, such as actors in front of a country show might be proud to wear.

The proselytism of the natives is a principle to which the French government is much opposed; still, as the Jews can scarcely be called "indigènes," the guardianship of their religion is left to their own keeping: it could not well be in safer hands. As zealous a man as lives, as earnest a labourer as ever toiled in the Lord's vineyard, has been zealous to little purpose, and has laboured almost in vain to convert this people from their ancient faith to that of the Gospel of Christ. He is called Weiss, and if sincerity and devotion could command success, there would not at present be a Jew left in all Algiers. But what avails it that he blow the trumpet in Zion ever so faithfully if none flock to his banner?—can it be that the standard of the missionary is too high, the spiritual meat too strong for the followers he would fain enlist? If this be so, the failure is attributable as much to a want of judgment on his part as to a lack of faith on theirs.

"I am come to change my religion," said a young Jew, calling upon the missionary one day, "will you aid me in doing so?" "Change your religion, man?" said he, "you've no re-

ligion to change; use right language, and say you are an unbeliever, and that you want to adopt the Christian religion; what have you to *change?*"

The Jew, nevertheless, did for a time profess the Christian faith, and was so attentive to his new duties that Mr. Weiss felt assured that in him at least he had found a sincere convert. But his hand was not steady on the plough, he looked back and proved that as yet, at any rate, he was "not fit for the kingdom of God." After a long absence he appeared again at the missionary's door, this time to explain: "I wished," he said, "to become a Christian, and to live like a Christian, but it is impossible; I am but a man, and you require me to be an angel."

The religion of a man, if it is not imbibed with his mother's milk, is instilled into him at his mother's knees; to displace it and substitute another requires something more than human agency, and nothing less than the hand of God.

The Moors were formerly men of high importance in the city of Algiers; at present they are the most depressed of its inhabitants.

For the most part poor and improvident, they now earn a precarious livelihood where once their wealth was boundless. The Moor, however, is half-brother to the Arab in his wandering nature; if Algiers do not suit him, Tunis or Tripoli may, and his Penates are constantly on the move. The poorest of them are treated like slaves: the waggons they draw and the burdens they carry under a burning sun, would astonish a London drayman not a little; and if, after witnessing their powers of labour, he only knew by what kind of nourishment their strength is sustained, his belief in beef and beer would be staggered for the rest of his days. The indigent Moor, however, is no vulgar labourer, but as lazy a fellow as lives, and he only works when his stomach pinches him; he keeps off the pressure as long as he can by smoking and sleeping alternately, and when endurance can go no farther, he gets into harness, couples himself up to the pole of a *charrette*, and then tugs and strains at the weight, as if his life depended upon the labour. But if the man's portion is toil and penury, that of his wife and children is still more so: they know no change

from the grim want and servitude to which they are consigned.

Captain Loche, who is an eminent ornithologist, and whose collection of rare birds is quite one of the wonders of Algeria, told us that improvidence and voluptuousness were the most striking features of the Moorish character. A Moor of the lowest class, who was in the habit of doing little commissions for him, and gained a scanty subsistence thereby, seemed one morning to be gayer than usual: "Why, Yagoub," said the captain to him, "you look as lively as a hawk, surely some good fortune has blessed you; what is it, my man?"

"I've just bought a young wife," said he; "her eyes are bright, and I am happy: God be praised."

"You, a young wife?—you've got one at home already, with three children: you can't keep another; where is the food and clothing to come from?"

"They'll eat from one bowl as before," said he; "and for clothing, I'll buy her two chemises and a pantaloon, and that will be sufficient, you know."

Captain Loche, in narrating this conversation, assured us that this man had never allowed his wife and children more than three sous a day, with which they purchased semouline, made it into porridge or kouskoussou, and thus managed to prolong life from one week to another, not only without change but with no prospect of alleviation. At the instigation of the wife, however, Captain Loche interfered and contrived to quash the new matrimonial scheme, and Yagoub became a better husband.

The stature of the Moors is above the middle size, and their brawny limbs, exposed to view, display a combination of bone and muscle which indicates the power of the cart-horse rather than that of the thorough-bred. The features are large but well formed, the nose acquiline, and the eye full, dark, and expressive; the colour of the skin is a clear olive, or what we call brunette, and the notion of a Moor being a black man in any country is a bungle attributable rather to Shakspeare's knowledge of stage effect than to ignorance on the subject. But, in compliance with the poet's description, so univer-

sally has his colour been represented as black, that the appearance of the character in any other colour would scarcely be recognised, or, if recognised, not accepted as that of a genuine Moor.

A friend of ours, who, without being stage-struck, had a great taste for theatricals, happened to stay in the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed for a few days; and hearing that a company of strolling players had just arrived, he inquired for the manager, and, by way of entertaining himself as well as the public, volunteered his services as an amateur for three successive nights. The offer was thankfully accepted, and the character of Othello at once allotted to him for the first night's performance. When the time came, our friend not liking the soot with which they proposed to colour him, and observing through a hole in the curtain that the house was a wretchedly thin one, refused to be blacked, alleging that the good folks of Berwick-upon-Tweed would be none the wiser: so the manager gave way, and he appeared in his own natural colour. The play was getting on remarkably well, our hero in the middle of making a telling speech,

and the audience all attention, when a bustle was heard at the back of the stage-box, and, to his horror, in hobbled upon sticks two men whom the eye of the amateur instantly recognised as Walter Scott and James Hogg. They had scarcely seated themselves, before Scott turned to Hogg, and said, in an audible whisper, "By heavens, Hogg, here's a white Othello!" and a roar of merriment ensued, which so disconcerted the hero, that instead of tragedy it became a perfect comedy: and the two great men are reported to have said that they had never passed a more amusing night.

Among the better class of Moors the ladies lead an easy and a comparatively tranquil life; beautiful in youth, but subject to early decay, they are like the wild flowers of their native plains, which delight the senses and flourish for a short season, only to perpetuate their race. At the early age of fourteen a Mauresque becomes marriageable: purchased by the husband at a price which is regulated by the charms of the lady, her prime solicitude is to present him with an early token of her affection, and to secure the matrimonial bond by an additional link. The Moorish lady may

not be singular in this respect; but to her the matter is of vital importance, for if she fail in this duty within the short period of two years, the husband may divorce her by law, and return her to her friends like a bale of useless goods. If he do so within the prescribed period, he is entitled to a restitution of a part of the purchase money; and this necessarily leads to litigation, immorality, and a complication of misery. The wedding garment, thus manufactured, sits loosely on the wearers, and, by application to the Mahommedan Court of Arches, malcontents of both sexes are permitted to cast it aside with little or no impediment.

Hitherto Mauresques have neither been able to read nor write; and, as they are excluded from the mosques, their occupations and amusements are confined to a very narrow circle, the latter to the bath and embroidery, the former to domesticities and the general cares of a family. Food for the mind and soul is equally denied to them. In strolling through the Moorish part of the town, a most interesting walk to a stranger, he will be amused to hear the soft merry

voices of women proceeding from the dark jackdaw-holes with which the house-walls are perforated: the holes themselves are not large enough to admit the human head, and yet, to make "assurance doubly sure," they are secured by massive iron-bars, which the French call a "grille," and which seem to bid defiance to the intrusion of anything more dangerous than a ray of light or the wooing breeze of a zephyr's wing. The Moorish ladies seldom appear in the streets after nightfall; but if they have occasion to pass from one house to another, they carry a lighted lamp in their hands to protect them from insult, and to indicate to the French police that they are proper women. Even in the daytime it is not the custom for veiled Mauresques to hold communication with any man in the streets: their nearest relation will pass them without a token of recognition. Nevertheless, as may be supposed, this is a rule which has many exceptions; and profiting, doubtless, by the vivacity of their new neighbours, they have become of late more communicative than they were wont to be in times past. Walking one day with a stately Moor in the Rue Benali, we

encountered two young Mauresques, attended by a negress nurse, carrying a fine baby in her arms. As the party approached, it was clear the gentleman and they were more than mere friends; the ladies uttered a kind of "hi hi," and the baby crowed in his face; but this was a distant salutation compared with what followed. One of the ladies drawing near, and unfolding the voluminous white shawl which drooped gracefully from the crown of her head to the knees, extended a plump fair arm, bare to the very shoulder, but adorned with rings and bracelets of a costly description, and seizing the Moor by his beard, wagged his head to and fro in the most ridiculous manner. The lady fairly screamed with delight at the torture she was inflicting, while the Moor appeared rather flattered than pained by her playful humour; at all events, "it pleased her and did not hurt him;" so, pointing at the baby, she laughed again in her victim's face, pulled his beard with impunity, and then passed on. The fair Mauresque was the man's wife; no other human being would have dared to play such pranks with a Mussulman's beard.

On another occasion we entered a French carpenter's shop: the man was at work making Turkish brackets and gilding them for the market; he was also smoking and talking, only as a Frenchman can talk and smoke, all at the same time. A young Moorish lady, about sixteen, walked in, and leisurely looking round, gave the man an order to make her a trinket box, the size of which she chalked out on his table, and then bargained for the price. The carpenter, however, made her understand that he expected a deposit, a part-payment, before he executed the order. The lady having no money about her, was at fault for a moment, but recovering herself as rapidly, she removed the veil from her face, and turned on us the full light of her eyes; then, as a child begs for a sweetmeat, she put on the most winning expression, and said, "Can't you help me to pay this thief?" The face, a very lovely one, was, doubtless, the lever by which power had been applied to carry her point on more occasions than the present one: the removal of the veil was of course a bribe that could not be resisted, so the box was ordered and paid for without further ado. On the lady's

departure, the carpenter informed us it was a common practice for the Moorish ladies to walk into his shop and order him to manufacture an article for which they promised to call on the following day, but that they generally forgot to do so: he was obliged, he said, to adopt the plan of pre-payment to check this childish amusement.

The force of example is doing its work both in civilising and demoralising the Moorish women; they observe the freedom enjoyed by the French ladies, but they do not, like the latter, enjoy education and religion to guide and restrain them in the proper use of it. Of late, some unmarried Mauresques have not only resisted the purchase system, but have refused to be united to Moorish husbands at all; and married ones have literally taken French leave in extending their privileges, and in casting off a yoke which they see is not borne by European wives. The Comtesse de Randon has on more than one occasion persuaded a few of the principal Moors to bring their ladies to witness her evening assemblies; and, although they sat veiled and separate, and took no active part in the festivities of the

night, yet the gaiety of the scene, the music and the mazy dance, must have left its impression, and probably induced comparisons unfavourable to their own secluded lot. But daylight is dawning upon them in a more direct and less questionable form than this: the education of the Moorish youth of both sexes is at length attracting public attention.* Urged to it by the persistent appeal and extraordinary self-devotion of a single indi-

* The Minister of War thus reports on the present state of public instruction in Algeria:—

"In what are called the military territories primary instruction has remained stationary, but at Algiers, Constantine, Bona, Blidah, Mostaganem, Flemcen, in the civil territories, a certain number of Mussulman schools for Arab and French instruction have, in execution of the decree of the 14th of July, 1850, been established, and are regularly attended by about 1200 pupils of both sexes. In Algiers in particular, at the end of last year, the number of Mussulman schools increased to four, and their pupils to about 450. Not content with what has been done for instruction, efforts have been made to moralise the rising Arab generation, by developing in it a taste for honest industry; and accordingly sums of money are to be given to European workmen who will receive Arab children from the schools as apprentices. A native school has been established at Algiers, and female children are taught the art of sewing."

vidual, and that too a lady, the French Government has been brought to acknowledge the wisdom of the measure, and to yield a tardy and reluctant support to it. Schools for the instruction of the Moorish boys had already been established, when Madame Luce, a widow possessing but a small income of her own, and unknown beyond the narrow circle of a few friends, determined to establish a girls' school, and to extend, if possible, the benefits of a useful and liberal education to the future wives and mothers of the Moorish population. Accordingly, not only without human help, but under heavy discouragement, she faced the difficulty, confident that a stronger power than that of man would support her in the prosecution of designs conceived only for the benefit of her fellow-creatures.

Having taken a house of considerable size in the centre of the Moorish town, Madame Luce's first business was to conciliate her neighbours and explain the object of her residence among them. Her knowledge of Arabic, acquired for this very purpose, and her own earnest and sincere manners, favoured her

early advances, and paved the way for at least the toleration, if not the hearty acceptance, of her plan. For many a weary year did she toil and toil on with four or five pupils only, to each of whose mothers she paid the weekly sum of two francs for the privilege of educating their daughters! At length, her private fortune being exhausted, she took the bold step of visiting Paris and appealing to the French Government in person. A grant of 3000 francs was the immediate result of this journey, and a promise of further support being added, she turned homewards with a light heart to recommence and redouble her efforts in behalf of her darling scheme.

Slowly but surely her philanthropic views came to be appreciated, and she has now the gratification of seeing 150 or 200 Mauresques daily crowding to her school. Madame Luce's promise to the parents not to interfere with the religion of her pupils is faithfully observed: notwithstanding, she deems it her duty and no violation of her promise to inculcate moral practices such as a Christian would think it necessary to observe. To read and write fluently in the French language, to keep ac-

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counts and work with the needle, are the main points insisted upon in their education; and according to the report of the Government Inspector, the progress of the pupils is highly satisfactory. Eventually, the result cannot fail to affect the social condition of the whole Moorish population, but especially that of the women, to whom instruction and occupation must prove a blessing. Truly Madame Luce has a mighty work in hand; but with her iron resolution, supported and encouraged by a firm trust in God, she is well fitted to the task: let any one look in her grand face and say if the combination of character which it indicates does not demonstrate a power equal to any emergency.

CHAP. V.

THE SETTLERS. — THE KABYLES. — THE MARABOUTS. — SAFE TRAVELLING IN THE COLONY.

With the exception of the Mahonese, the colonists of Algeria are not a thriving race; but the causes of failure are attributable to no want of fertility in the soil nor of industry in the cultivators. The French Government has not been sufficiently liberal in its concessions, either with regard to the produce of the country or the establishment of the settlers in their new possessions. In this case, long and tedious delays in obtaining the necessary title to an estate keep the occupier unsettled and his capital insecure: and then certain conditions are imposed requiring the farmer to raise so many buildings and to plant so many trees within a given time; which conditions, if not fulfilled, subject him to the loss not only of

the farm but of the money which he has already expended upon it. In the other, such men as our free-trade leaders are wanted in the French Chambers to represent the interests of Algeria, to give life and buoyancy to the colony. Labour is very high, and consequently the necessaries of life are high also. But the propinquity of the colony to the mother country is perhaps the greatest drawback of all. No sooner does the settler become disgusted with his new abode than he turns his face homewards: he stands on the edge of the blue sea, with nothing but it between him and his home, and, in imagination, he almost sees his native hills; and he does see the vessels which conveyed him and his friends from their native port returning almost daily to the same not far-distant haven. The thought is father to the act; a few francs pay for his berth, and in forty-eight hours he is again in France. Our colonists cannot gratify their whims in this way; theirs is a life-abandonment of home, when once they have quitted it for any of our foreign colonies; and the price of the passage is no small obstacle to their return.

Much of the plain of the Metidja is already

well drained and well farmed;* but, whenever you see a tract of land in better form than the rest, you may be sure that the occupier is a Mahonese. Englishmen, on two or three occasions, have attempted to establish themselves as squatters in the country; but with all the advantage of superior implements, a thorough knowledge of farming, and the aid of capital, labour has failed them, and they have not succeeded so well as they deserved. The cultivation of the virgin soil is often fatal to the first cultivators, and few escape the African fever who are engaged in breaking fresh ground. Nevertheless, grubbing, firing, and draining are going on in every direction, and new villages

* The Report of the Minister of War states "that from all the information collected, the natives are more than ever turning their attention to agricultural pursuits; and this fact is proved by the statistical accounts of the quantity of ground under cultivation. In 1855 the number of hectares (2½ acres each) sown in the provinces of Algiers, Oran, and Constantine, was 1,765,071; and in 1856, 2,082,524, showing an increase of 347,453 hectares. Notwithstanding this increase in extent, the Arabs have not made so much improvement as could be wished in their system of cultivation. They fear that as colonization by Europeans advances, they shall be dispossessed of the ground they now hold."

spring up like the gourd of Jonah; they are "a shadow for the head" and little more. At the far end of the forest of the Regaiah, about eight or nine leagues from Algiers, is the new town of Boudaouah; it stands on the edge of the little Atlas, close upon the neutral ground between Kabylia and the French possessions. At present (1857) it numbers about twenty houses, all of which have been built in a "clearing" of the forest, within the past year; and, sad to relate, every house is an *auberge*, most of them furnished with wines and rare liqueurs such as could not be obtained in any second-class hotel in England. With such temptations in their way, and such incentives to idleness and vice, how can it be expected that the colonists will prosper?—the thing is morally impossible, and they who do expect otherwise will be miserably disappointed.

The wants of the colony create a perpetual drain on the French treasury; and although enormous sums are expended, even to the annual amount of more than a hundred million francs, very little of it is devoted to the use of the poor emigrant: he is neither started fairly at first, nor encouraged liberally after-

wards. The Summer Palace of Hussein, the last Dey of Algiers, has indeed been converted into a vast warehouse for the reception of the tobacco grown in the colony. Government takes possession of it and guarantees a remunerating price to the grower; but if the former, by converting the weed into cigars, do not realise a better profit than the latter, both will become bankrupt together.

The vast army maintained in Algeria and the crowd of officials employed to administer the civil affairs of the colony divert the stream of help from the colonist, and embarrass the treasury. Of the soldiers and civilians we wish to say nothing but what is respectful; if the latter are unacquainted with the language and habits of the people whose affairs they are called upon to manage, then is the government to blame. The English judges on the Welsh circuits require interpreters, and through them administer the law to the Celtic race; but if men with a thorough knowledge of the Welsh and their language were made judges of the land, then would matters be simplified amazingly. To obey orders is the first duty of a soldier and if he is commanded to carry

the sword, fire, and famine into the highlands of Kabylia, the responsibility rests with the Government. The enormous expense attendant upon these expeditions is, and long has been, the cause of much dissatisfaction in the colony. Still, in defiance of public feeling, the horrors of war are ever and anon perpetrated upon an industrious people, their homes burned, their women violated, and their land rendered desolate. Then the Kabyles retaliate by mutilating and roasting the enemy who is unlucky enough to fall alive into their hands. Theirs is the revenge of savages, and is even admitted, if not commanded, by their religion, and therefore not to be wondered at. But the civilised French people, who are, or ought to be, Christians, know better, and should be the first to set an example of mercy, peace, and forbearance to their less enlightened neighbours. The example might have its effect better than rough measures.

The Kabyles inhabit a vast mountainous district lying between Algiers and Constantine, and are supposed to number 150,000 fighting men. They have, however, no commander in chief, and each tribe is left to redress its own

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wrongs; consequently, as they can make no head against a regular army, neither can they be conquered *en masse* in any general engagement. They have as many heads as the Lernæan snake, but, unlike it, they are not to be vanquished by any hero. They are a fine warlike race of men, and descendants of those unconquerable Numidians who defied the armies of ancient Rome. Excepting their religion, which is Mahommedan, they have no affinity with the Arabs; their language, customs and mode of life are distinct from those of the wandering tribes of the plain. Each tribe elects its own chief and has its own peculiar form of government. Every acre of land which is not rock or sterility itself is cultivated by this industrious people, nor is the art of manufacture unknown to them. During the late war their gunpowder was found to be so fine and so strong that the French pronounced it to be English; but it was afterwards proved to be of Kabyle fabrication. Soft and luxurious carpets, fit for a palace; cloths of wool, if not equal to our Tweeds, yet far better than some of the shoddy productions of Yorkshire, emanate from their looms. They also fabricate

their own arms, implements, and leather, the last of excellent and durable quality.

The Kabyle in Algiers is known by his leathern apron, peculiar sandals, and black and white striped burnous: by these tokens the unpractised eye may distinguish him from the Arabs or any of the various races which frequent that town. When the Romans invaded Kabylia, they left behind them a boon of inestimable benefit to its inhabitants; they planted the hill sides with olive-trees, and taught the people how to engraft them. Oil is now an essential of life to them; they consume it in every shape, burn it in their wonderfully shaped clay lamps, eat it with every dish, and with it steam their favourite kous-koussou. The jars in which their oil is stowed away are enormously large, and average in height from four to six feet; the traveller who sees them will remember the story of the Forty Thieves, and then, perhaps for the first time, understand how full-grown men, armed and equipped for their murderous work, could be concealed in earthen jars. The Kabyles may fairly be said to be a priest-ridden race; for every public act of importance is controlled and directed by

their Marabouts. The issues of life and death depend upon the dicta of these prophets; it is by their counsel that peace blesses the land, or that war transforms it into a state of wailing and woe. The cunning of the knaves is only equalled by the fanaticism of the people; and the education by which they are qualified for their priestly profession enables them to practise their impositions on the unlearned only with greater success. Truly, of them it might be said: "O Israel, thy prophets are like the foxes in the deserts." *

It will be satisfactory to the traveller in North Africa to learn that, with the exception of those districts in Kabylia which have not yet acknowledged the supremacy of the French arms, and from all accounts they are now but few, he may wander with the utmost security

* A Marabout is often a man of weak intellect, who is half-pitied, half-venerated, and when he dies is usually buried in a dome-shaped mausoleum, either by the wayside or in some conspicuous spot. The building, which is open for all visitors, is always whitewashed, and, glistening in the sun, may be seen from a long distance. To its sacred shrine pilgrims resort to pray, and criminals fly thither for protection; even women are allowed to enter here and to derive consolation from spiritual intercourse with the departed saint. So great is their veneration for the Marabout.

from one end of Algeria to the other; from Tunis to Angad-du-Tell on the confines of Morocco; from the Mediterranean Sea to the tribe of Beni-Mzab on the borders of the Great Desert. This security is of course wholly due to French management: letters from the "Bureau Arabe" are not only effective as passports of protection, but ensure also a concession of respect which may not otherwise be given. The whole country has been portioned into districts, over which French and indigenous officers have been placed in command; so in whatever district an act of violence is perpetrated its chief officer is held responsible for it, and he is bound to bring the offender to justice. Failing this, he himself, perhaps being the Kaid of his tribe and under the pay of the French Government, is punished by deposition, fine, or imprisonment, according to the magnitude and character of the offence. A few sharp examples have satisfied the Arabs that the French law is not to be trifled with; and accordingly the human person is as safe, if not safer, from violence in French Algeria than it is in some parts even of Great Britain.

CHAP. VI.

THE CARNIVAL. — JUGGLERS. — OLD PIRATE. — MOORISH CIRCUMCISION. — SHOOTING IN THE MARSHES. —DOG STEALERS OF ALGIERS.—CAPT. LOCHE'S IMPERIAL COLLECTION OF BIRDS. — BOAR HUNTING.

When the night was advancing at Algiers, and dinner had been cleared from the marble slab on which our meals were served, it was no small pleasure to sum up the events of the day and to inscribe them, then and there, in the pages of a note-book. Matters of great or small importance found equal admission, and all were chronicled without partiality. Now, from this bank, of very limited liability, we propose to let the public draw; but at the same time we promise to withhold from circulation those notes which are not likely to be received with interest. Our diary on the

20th February, has the following entry: Rode with the Vernons to Boudjaréah, the highest point of the Sahel ridge. Algiers looked from it like a set of white tea-cups, huddled together on a waiter, and the Mediterranean like a blue mist which the eye could not penetrate. Nothing could surpass the grandeur of the view towards the mountains nevertheless. Heard of the dolmens on the plateau, similar to those of Brittany, and supposed to be the tombs of a band of Armoricans; but did not see them. Not a yard of level ground from Algiers to Boudjaréah enabled us to try our steeds' paces; we walked up and walked down again. Saw the Jews' burial-ground in sad disorder; and reflected that at all events, the fifth commandment was not their particular fancy. If they took as much pride in the adornment of their graveyard as they do in that of their persons, instead of being a mere charnel ground, visited by the hyena, it would be the most decorated cemetery in Africa. Vernon is a noble companion in the country; he loves and studies nature; and considers the lilies of the field and the fowls of the air as God's messengers, proclaiming His

handiwork; he has also the happy knack of imparting his knowledge without pedantry.

February 24th.—Being Shrove Tuesday, the town was quite wild with the excitement of the Carnival. The frivolity of the scene beyond belief. Masked men and women in every variety of shape and costume, representing bears, monkeys, and even the unclean pig: dancing, drinking, and riding *dos-à-dos* upon donkeys: buffooning no name for it. The wondering Arabs and Moors regarded the scene with unmixed contempt; and, if they knew that it was but the prelude to a religious fast, they must have concluded that the Christian community at Algiers had taken leave of its senses. For the feast in the evening, a handsome bull, his horns gilded and his back garnished with flowers, ribbons, and tassels, was led triumphantly through the streets, followed by a procession that would have done honour to the Lord Mayor of London. Verily these civilisers of the world must have fallen many degrees in the estimation of the dignified natives. Then the revelling and intoxication at night were frightful; the whole city was in an uproar.

February 25th.—Ash Wednesday: all quiet to-day. Torrents of rain fell as if to wash away the pollution of yesterday. Up to this day no rain had fallen since our arrival at Algiers: but we were fortunate enough to come at the tail-end of a long tempest. Attended Divine service at the Protestant chapel.

February 26th.—Invited by the Rev. B. E. to witness the wonders of some African jugglers: they swallowed fire, like maccaroni, by the yard, until their stomach must have been a small volcano; and cut themselves with knives and lancets after the manner of the priests of Baal: they charmed the deaf adder with incantations, and shook it off when it fastened upon them, as St. Paul did the venomous beast at Melita. In the afternoon my wife went on the water with Lady S. V. H. I hardly liked to trust them to the villanous old Moor whose boat they hired: he looked the personification of an Algerian pirate, and had doubtless cut many a throat and scuttled many a fine ship in his day. He had lived at Malta and had picked up a little English, of which he was very proud. He affected a love

for our countrymen; saw Lord Exmouth bring the Queen Charlotte to an anchor under the very guns of the fort, and heard him send his famous message to the Dey, in which he gave him two hours to deliberate on the terms he proposed. The time having elapsed and no answer returned, the gallant admiral turned to his crew and said, "Now fire away, boys." Upon which the bombardment commenced and soon brought the Dey to reason.

But the old corsair was more than garrulous: he was crafty and revengeful as any tiger. He hated the French mortally, and could not understand why they, after taking the city, did not take themselves off as other conquerors had done before them. On every occasion on which he was hired, he remembered to point out the weak parts of the French fortifications, and suggested that if English powder was as strong as it was formerly, the city was no stronger now than in the days of Lord Exmouth.

Naturally enough, the Arabs as well as the Moors eye their conquerors with more fear than affection: they are not however unobservant of the conciliatory measures which the French

have adopted towards them: they like the conveniences of the omnibus, the picturesque fountains constructed in and about the city; and above all, the Moorish ladies delight in the *bon-bon* shops and in the beautiful articles of French *bijouterie*. Many a five-franc ornament is preferred by them, for its elegant design or filigree fashion, to their own substantial jewels of priceless value.

February 28th. — The news of Lord H.'s death reached the city this day: killed by a fall from his horse in the hunting-field, in which his father also died. The West Riding of Yorkshire will long lament its loss.

Witnessed a grand ceremony at Ali ben Hamed's house; to which Lord S., Vernon, Severne senr., and myself, were especially invited. Ali's daily supply of coffee from his Café Maure, which was within three doors of my lodgings, had established quite an intimacy between us, and he liked to linger and tell us any scraps of news that affected his own family or the Moorish community in general. I never remember to have seen a grander countenance than his; he was gentle as a child, and yet his noble bearing expressed

every manly virtue; Phidias would have chosen him out of a thousand: a jaunty turban of red silk surmounted his brow, and he stood six feet high without his slippers. One night his measured step on the staircase, as he mounted with our coffee, sounded a little more hurried than usual: we had drilled him to knock at the door before entering, but on this occasion he forgot the ceremony, and stalked forward with the assurance of one who had a tale to tell, and whose tale must command attention. "To-morrow night," said he, "my son is to be circumcised: supper and music will be prepared; many friends will be there; bring the Inglese."

"At what hour shall we come, Ali?" said I; "it will give me and my friends great pleasure to be present at the fête."

"Supper from eight to twelve: the circumcision at midnight." Ali then deposited the coffee and, with a salaam, withdrew to his café. The Café Maure, of which he was the proprietor, was a mere underground den, into which no ray of light entered except by the doorway: it was a shady retreat in every sense of the word, but still in the oppressive

heat of summer it must have been a grateful one to his numerous Arab customers. His coffee too, with a lump of refined sugar in it, all for one sou, in fine quality and fragrance was unsurpassable; and Ali always knew the exact moment for supplying the lighted coal to the pipe, the fumes of which improve the flavour of coffee as the taste of olives do that of port wine. Such a man as Ali would make his fortune in London in ten years; and in another ten sport his hammer-cloth, and be rewarded with a sheriff's gold chain. But to the ceremony. Being anxious to see all that was to be seen, we started early, but a difficulty arose with respect to Ali's family mansion: no one knew and no one could be found to tell us in what part of the Moorish town it was situated. We wandered about for some time, like perturbed spirits, through narrow and noiseless passages, up and down a thousand steps in the almost perpendicular streets, till at length a Moor, understanding the *Sabir* language, if that can be called a language, which is but a mixture of doggerel French, Spanish, and Arabic used in Algeria, and divining the object of our visit, conducted us to the

very door. Ali at home was a very different man from Ali in his public capacity: instead of receiving us with his usual humble salaam, he welcomed us with the air of a grand duke, and did his honours so admirably that we were all charmed with his pleasant manner and our own hospitable reception. The company consisted of forty or fifty Moors, dressed in gay and holiday attire, but anything so sombre as themselves I never yet saw. They squatted on their hams in two rings, one within the other; but no man held converse with his neighbour, nor, if he knew him, cared to cultivate his acquaintance. If an English girl could have popped in her head and seen these grave men seated in circles, she would have concluded that a game of hunt-the-slipper was about to be played; and she would not have failed to lament that so sprightly a sport should have fallen into such dull hands. Even the smoke from their pipes curled up in lazy volumes, and seemed to hang about their heads, as smoke does, previous to an impending shower, about the chimney pots of an English house. Three musicians, raised upon a daïs above the company, soothed their ears

with a drony and monotonous music, which fully accounted for the humour of the guests. Then the instruments they used were of the most grotesque appearance; and if they did not come out of the Ark, they must have belonged to that Babylonian band which boasted of the "sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer;" and if they did, no wonder the three Jews gave such little heed to the royal decree or to the vile music by which it was proclaimed. In the meantime, coffee and pipes went round merrily, and the kou-koussou was excellent. A huge bowl in the centre contained this African food, and a small wooden spoon being placed in the hand of each of the guests, they were commanded to fall to and feed. With the exception of the music, the perfect silence of the assembly was what struck me most. At home the clatter of the meal drowns the music, if you are fortunate enough to dine with a band; but here it was *vice versâ;* music alone was heard, all else was noiseless.

The boy was a handsome, fine little fellow, upon whom the rite was about to be practised; he was literally dressed in a suit of purple and

gold, and was of course the chief object of attraction to all. He did not appear to look forward to the ceremony with much alarm, but his thoughts were probably diverted from it by the music and novel scene before him. When the clock of the great mosque struck twelve, which, by the way it did to the same familiar tune played by the chimes of old Carfax Church, at Oxford, his father, Ali, took the lad gently in his arms and laid him on a beautiful bed. No form of prayer, that I could perceive, preceded the operation, but the operator, a mere barber, stepped up and the thing was done in an instant. Then a wild shriek from the youth burst upon the ear, but as quickly it was drowned by the wilder cries of the women: these, hidden from sight, maintained a continuous "hi, hi, hi, hi," in a high key that effectually silenced all other sounds. The friends then offered gifts, every man according to his means; and, for a week afterwards, the little fellow walked about the city holding up his apron to signify what had taken place, and to catch the pieces of money which the public cast into his lap. These offerings frequently amount to a large

sum, and serve the purpose of prentice-money to start the boy in life. Ishmael was circumcised by Abraham at the age of thirteen; and, following this example, the Moors and the Arabs practise the rite from ten to that age: the lad in question was just ten.

March 2nd.—Vernon has already made a small collection of African birds, but wishes to increase it with a few specimens from the marshes of the Metidja: so we agreed to run all risks of fever and go together as soon as I could obtain the necessary *port-d'armes*. This, without any real difficulty, was a very troublesome affair to manage; I was passed on, from one to the other, by at least half-a-dozen civil functionaries. The Prefecture, the Mairie, the Registrar's Office required my personal attendance; and, after paying twenty-five francs, it was two days before I secured it. The system of the Circumlocution Office is evidently not confined to our own country. Vernon had obtained his *port-d'armes* some time ago with no trouble to himself: he had simply requested the English Vice-Consul to be good enough to get it for him, which, by

virtue of his official position, was at once done through his servant.

March 4th.—Vernon and I started betimes this morning for the Maison-Carrée; three small thorough-bred Arab horses, harnessed abreast like horses of the sun, conveyed us thither, in a public *voiture*, in something less than an hour. One of them was a vicious brute, and, as we sat by the driver on a kind of low box, kicked into the middle of us with right good will; however, as he only did this in going down hill, the driver took care to keep him in a stretch-gallop whenever the road required it, and so we suffered no damage. On arriving at the Maison-Carrée we paid our ten sous apiece, had a cup of *champoreau* at Felix's, and then sallied forth for the *chasse*. Following the course of a small brook, the waters of which were turbid and unwholesome, we soon came upon the open, uncultivated plain. An occasional snipe whisked up, and, by flying in a straight direction, right away, indicated that in front of us we might expect to find the head-quarters, not only of snipe, but of other wading fowl. A gorse hawk, of remarkable size and beauty,

and not unlike the gyr-falcon of the north, flew out of a small reedy cover, but we did not get a shot at him; then, not far from the same spot, out skulked a jackal, which gave Vernon a long shot, but he failed to "pot" him even with an Eley's green cartridge; he was fairly out of range. Three lofty palm-trees stood at some distance before us, near an Arab gourbie, and within a few yards of them the great marsh commenced. The cry of the frogs was terrific, and could be heard at least a mile off: some of them were so bloated and large, that the picture in Æsop's Fables, of the frog and the ox, seemed no longer a caricature. If our Gallic neighbours have the same gastronomic fancies in Algeria which they are said to have at home, verily theirs are pleasant lines, they have pitched their tents in a land of plenty.

On entering the marsh the danger of not being able to find the way out of it was the first difficulty that occurred to both of us; but we discovered that by means of narrow paths, formed by cattle passing through the tall reeds, we occasionally caught glimpses of the distant Atlas, and thus our landmark was

fixed. Snipe rose at every ten paces and gave us capital shooting; but we looked in vain for a single specimen of a rare bird. The season of migration was about commencing, and although we did not succeed in springing them, yet, doubtless, many strange birds had already found their way to this vast tract of reed and sedge. The stork, the pewit, the heron, rose at every crack of the gun; but the egret and the bittern lay all the closer for it. A team of strong and wild English spaniels, rattling through the cover and forcing the waders to the wing, would have discovered many an ornithological wonder; swarms of snipe and plover would have darkened the air; and then, like the Spartans of old, we might have shot in the shade. As it was, it was cruelly hot and miasmatic; the vapours of the marsh were so offensive and so penetrating that they seemed to enter the brain and to leave a taste on the tongue that nothing could wash out. A perpetual pipe, however, and occasional nips of brandy served to rectify the foul exhalation and to neutralise its evil effects. Our bag was a tolerably good one, but with a retriever it might have been first-rate; how

bitterly did Vernon regret the loss of his, which had been stolen from him only a short time since. Talk of the rogues of London affected by Bishop's Act, they are all honourable men compared with the dog thieves of Algiers. The better a dog is, the worse is his master's chance of keeping him; the only security is to chain him to his own bed-post. When the grandfather of the present Duke of Beaufort was anxious to obtain a hound of the famous "Prodigal" blood, he sent an old kennel feeder to Lord Yarborough's kennels in Lincolnshire, and warned him, when he got the hound, not to let him out of his sight until he was back again safely at Badminton. The man obeyed the order to the letter. It was a week's journey in those days, and at every hotel in which he passed the night he led the hound to his chamber and chained him to the bed-post. The rage of the chamber-maid and the abuse of the landlady can be better imagined than described; suffice it to say, that at one inn he was absolutely beaten with a broom and driven to the stable, where he and his canine companion shared the straw, and slept together in peace. The good old

duke was wont to say of his trusty servant, that he was a great conqueror, for he had fought his way from Lincoln to Gloucester, and had only lost one battle.

March 5th.—Went with Vernon to see the famous collection of birds made by Captain Loche, and preserved for the French Government. Both the captain and his lady were at home, and received us with much kindness. Cases of birds of every genus and almost every species filled the rooms, the staircase, and the balcony of the old Moorish house in which this distinguished naturalist lived. Hawks, from the merlin to the great condor; Gallinæ, from the three-toed Bedouin quail to the ostrich of the desert; every variety of pigeon, from the booz, with his short mandibles, to the great carrier of Constantine; singing birds of sombre hue, and those without song of exquisite plumage, gave us a treat of which I had no conception. But that which imparted to the collection a peculiar interest was the illustration supplied to it by Madame Loche. Her anecdotes were matchless: she had seen this bird killed, and that rescued from the fangs of a cook; she had watched night

and day by her husband's traps, and when the steel struck, the panther walked away with the prey. Among the live birds, the grouse of the desert were not the least remarkable; their sandy-colour and thickly feathered feet, being true lagopoi, indicated the region in which Nature had formed them to live. Then, among beasts, there was a new species of Zorilla, the *Zorilla Vaillantii*, discovered by Captain Loche. He belonged to the weasel tribe, was marked with longitudinal bars of black and white from his ears to his tail, and had a black mask just over his eyes—a very curious animal. The desert hare and an elegant little fox-like beast (*Fennecus Cordo*) with tufted feet, a long brush, and a fine sand-coloured skin were there; tame porcupines, which placed their fore-paws on Madame Loche's lap, munched a biscuit from her hands, and seemed, with their quills down, to be rather good-tempered than otherwise. Vernon and I were charmed with the collection; but it would take a week to examine it, and another week to describe it properly. There was one feature, however, in this wonderful menagerie which neither of us liked. On the

house-top were chained two captive eagles, deplumed, subdued, and dejected! — could thraldom go farther? — the soaring eagle, the companion of the sun, chained to a chimney-pot! in sight of his native mountains! To be in keeping, the captain should have had a Kabyle chief chained to the adjoining stack! there would have been strong sympathy between them, at least in one direction; and the picture of captivity would have then been complete. It remains to be said, that the genius of the collector was only equalled by his modesty, and the variety of the collection by the order with which it was arranged.

Returned to my home, and soon afterwards received the following note from Vernon:

"There is to be a big boar-hunt to-morrow at the Regaiah; Prince Napoleon and perhaps General Yussuff will be there, so the Bureau Arabe turns out the Caids. I send on; and go to cover in a 'bus. Come, if you can manage it."

March 6th. — Had I received an invitation to dine with the Governor-General of Algeria on this eventful occasion, the marshal would

have lacked one guest, at least, on the day of the big boar-hunt. But he did not ask me, fortunately for him. At five o'clock, A.M. the carriage drove to the door, a light *omnibus à volonté*, and picked up Captain Christie, Vernon and myself. Both of my companions had sent their horses on to the Regaiah over night, but concluding, wrongly as it afterwards appeared, that I should see as much of the sport on foot, I forebore to order a steed; and became a spectator rather than a participator in the *chasse*. The meet at the cover side was picturesque in the extreme; but the never-ending breakfast of the French must be discussed in the hôtel, before business could be done in the forest. That over, a council of war was held by the mounted horsemen on the line of country most favourable for the game. Unluckily for me, the Fondouck side of the forest was chosen, and away they went, best pace, for at least four miles before they began to draw. Just then, a gentleman called Riviere, himself on foot, overtook me, and volunteered to be my guide. "We have no occasion," said he, "to follow the horsemen; let us cross this ravine, mount yonder hill, and

then we shall command a perfect view of the scene. Besides," added he, "the boars always run for the mountains; so we shall head them and cut off their retreat." The whole thing sounded so probable, that I gave a willing consent to the arrangement, and considered myself fortunate in having so experienced a man to direct me. In Brittany the boar-hunters always load their guns with a *balle-mariée*, that is, with two balls screwed firmly together; and on the present occasion I charged both barrels after the same approved fashion. As we trudged along through the forest, in the direction indicated by M. Riviere, different kinds of small game sprung up from under our feet, such as the Barbary partridge, the Bedouin quail, and the solitary snipe; and, had it not been for the undrawable *balle-mariée*, I should certainly have bagged some of them.

The forest resembled a wild-flower garden; a fairer spot was never seen; the cactus and myrtle, a beautiful white heath from three to four feet high, and a lovely wild rose, all in full flower, charmed the senses and filled the air with perfume. As we gained the hill-

side, which commanded the ravine, we saw with disgust that the hunters were still a good league off, and did not appear to be drawing in our direction. The atmosphere, however, was so clear that we could see every movement as distinctly as if we had been amongst them. Suddenly, a wild roar rent the air; it was the simultaneous shout of a hundred Arabs as they viewed a pig breaking cover and going straight away. In an instant the whole company were at full speed and riding hard at the game; but, ever as a horseman approached him, the pig turned short, and the spear was delivered in vain. Some of the Arabs, however, carried long guns, richly ornamented with silver, and when they brought them to bear he toppled over like a rabbit. But he seemed possessed of a wonderful vitality, that first boar; for again and again he jumped upon his legs, and the chase was renewed with fresh vigour, till at length he fell riddled with balls. The same fate awaited the seven successive pigs that were found; short grace and hard lines upon all. Not one stood twenty minutes before his pursuers; not one faced about and charged fiercely in return; but all

turned tail from first to last, and died like cowards, only seeking safety in flight. The poor brutes were clearly overmatched from "the find to the finish," and certainly would have shown more sport, if they had been given more law. It is the fashion abroad to laugh at the inequality of our chase, "fifteen couple of hounds, say they, after one little fox;" but he who knows the difficulty of killing a fox, when the scent does not serve, knows full well that the wily animal thinks scorn of the odds brought against him on such an occasion, and generally escapes with his life.

The rock, on which we were perched, gave an ichnographic view of the whole scene; but as to a shot at a boar, that was a fabulous delusion. At one time, however, when the chase approached nearer than usual, the bushes in the ravine below were distinctly heard to crackle, and Riviere and myself cocked our guns deliberately. But luckily the wild beast poked his nose clear of the cover, and then we discovered it was only a tame camel, browsing on a small mimosa-tree. Had we slain the camel, Riviere would have gone mad with disgust, and I should never again have mentioned

the *balle-mariée* in connection with the hunters of Brittany.

On arriving at the hostelry, in the village of the Regaiah, eight fine pigs were extended side by side in the stable-yard: many had been wounded with a spear, but were finally killed by ball. The hero of the day was a boy about fourteen years of age, the son of the Caid, a fine aristocratic Arab, who conducted the beaters and organised the sport. This manly little fellow rode a spirited horse, and had handled both it and his rifle with so much dexterity, that he managed to bowl over two out of the eight boars. The mounted Arabs, of which there were from eighty to a hundred, treated us to a *fantasia* in the street of the Regaiah. This exhibition was intended to be a compliment to their friends, and a kind of finish to the day's diversion. They rode short races up and down the road, like men demented; they fired their long guns, and instantly whirled them in the air above their heads, then caught them again, while going at full speed. Their white burnouses, streaming behind and on either side of their horses, looked like wings; and, without a great

stretch of imagination, were quite sufficient to suggest the idea of a Pegasus to the ancients. Generally speaking the horses were sorry jades*, under-sized, under-fed, and cat-hamed; but they were easy goers, and beautifully broken. The men were a beautiful specimen of the *genus homo:* clean-limbed, sinewy, handsome, and intelligent.

Our national taste had also its exhibition. A Donnybrook hero was once heard to say, there was no fun without a fight: on the present occasion he would not have gone without his treat. But the hero in this case was, I believe, a Scotchman. Considering him-

* The Minister of War, in his Report, thus alludes to the improvement already produced in the breed of horses in Algeria:—"The attempts of the Government in this direction date from the government of Marshal the Duke d'Isly; but the greatest impulse has been given under that of the present Governor-General. The creation of depôts of stallions either belonging to the State or to the tribes, the establishment of races at the principal towns of the three provinces, and the granting of premiums for the best horses produced, have been attended with the best effects. The last competition for premiums shows in the fullest manner the great improvement which has taken place, and the valuable resources which France may draw from Algeria for remounting her light cavalry."

self aggrieved at the imposition of a villanous Maltese, he declined paying his demand. The latter had then the temerity to call him an English Jew, upon which he was at once levelled to the dust by the fist of the indignant Scot. But the Maltese, as an English subject, showed fight, — and did fight desperately. However, the officers of the Chasseurs d'Afrique very kindly interfered, and put an end to the offensive affair. General Yussuff was not present, but the prince was, and deported himself right manfully and pleasantly throughout the day.

March 10*th.* — Went to the *Bains Maures*, in the Rue d'État-Major. Sciatica and rheumatism are said to be cured by these baths. But the whole thing is a misnomer; baths they are not, but simply vapour rooms, in which you breathe with difficulty, and feel as if you were becoming sodden, like an over-steamed potato. I never before understood what was meant by a "good strapper." A brawny nigger uses a "swab" upon you with such vigorous effect that your skin literally shines like that of a horse in condition when subjected to similar treatment.

But although elbow-grease is suitable to the ribs and skin of a horse, it may be a little too strong for the parchment of a human being. When extended on a kind of gridiron, side by side with an asthmatic French gentleman, he said, jocosely: "If I escape alive from this place, I shall be in good health for months to come." He had suffered the remedy, and certainly deserved the cure. The bed after the bath was a real luxury ; a pipe, a cup of coffee, and an hour's sweet sleep completed the process. But the Moorish ladies have a kind of pic-nic at the baths: they bring baskets full of provisions and *bon-bons*, and usually devote the whole day to this their chief indulgence. If anything could wash a nigger white it would be the scrubbing and steaming practised in these baths. For my part, I was like a red Indian for a week afterwards; but I felt none of the invigorating effects said to be produced by the heat and rough manipulation to which I submitted. The Frenchman mentioned above was a Monsieur Tennyson ; he usually passed his winters at Algiers, his summers at Aix in Savoy, or Cagliari in Sardinia. He had travelled all through France, with the

hope of finding a resting place, but found none in which he could breathe without distress. He was better at Algiers than in any other climate; yet even here he found it necessary to take an occasional Moorish bath, which always relieved him, and set him up for some months. I have rarely seen so fine a frame as his, especially about the chest. He was full sixty years of age, and from his robust appearance I should never have suspected that he was an asthmatic subject.

A strange lot of Arabs arrived in the city this day; they were called Mozabites, from the country of Beni-Mzab, which is due south of Algiers, and on the borders of the Great Desert. On inquiring, I found these to be merchants of considerable wealth and enterprise, their "speciality" being wool of a fine merino character. The Mozabites are the Kabyles of the plain, being, like them, descendants of the ancient Berbers, speaking a dialect of the same language, and having similar habits and institutions.

The huge coil of brown camel's hair rope, wound round the head of the Arab, is worn in honour of the Prophet, who was himself a camel-

driver. It is not altogether an encumbrance, for it helps to keep off the burning rays of the sun, supports the head when reclining on the hard ground, and so serves the double part of *sombrero* and pillow at the same time.

Saw a huge hyæna, caught by some Arabs in a cave near the town only a few days since. They tell incredible stories of the appetite of this animal; that one can eat up a horse for his supper. If it be true, he must have some engine in his stomach to compress the food, as tons of hay are compressed into a very small compass by means of a patent machine. Apropos to voracity;—a gallant captain of a certain crack regiment of dragoons, who was said to be the least well-informed officer in his Majesty's service, had the following story told of him by his brother officers.

One day at mess, "'Dan" volunteered information on natural history, to the amazement of the whole table. "The rhinoceros," said he, "must have a wonderful appetite; he can eat a whole elephant at a meal."

"Who told you that, Dan?"

"I read it in a book," said he, "and I know it's true."

"Do you?" said the inquirer; "perhaps you would like to produce your authority?"

"Certainly," said the other; and away he skipped to his rooms for a book, the production of which caused the most outrageous mirth. It was one of those small twopenny books which are published for the use of children: there was the picture of an animal at the top, and a short description of it at the foot of each page. When the roar of the merriment had subsided a little, Dan was called upon to read out, which he proceeded to do forthwith:

"The rhinoceros is a very voracious animal; he can eat as much as an elephant at a meal."

Having read thus far, he put the book in his pocket with an air of triumph; and it was some time before his brother officers could get him to understand that the passage admitted of a different reading.

When the hunters enter a cave in search of a hyæna, the glare of his eyes is the lamp which enables them to take a good shot at him in the dark. And so it is with the lion. Gerard always chose the darkest night for

attacking him, for then, according to that notable hunter, his eyes shone brightest, and afforded the best mark for the bullet.

March 16th. — Shot with Lord S. and Vernon near Rhuiba. Killed a few quail, and had a good hour at some red-throated grebe. We found them in a long pond, among the palmettas, behind the village; and had it not been for an Arab, who was "tenting" a herd of cattle, the grebes would have beaten us; as it was, not a bird of them escaped. The Arab doffed his burnous and took to the water, as if it had been his native element; then, with a splash and a shout, he compelled the grebes to rise and to pass within shot of us. What became of his cattle in the mean time we did not know, nor did he seem to care. The Arab led me, at my request, to a stream of sweet water; and on my deeming it advisable to mix a little brandy with it, he fixed his eye on my flask and begged a draught. I explained its nature, but *malgré* the Prophet, on my handing him the liquor, he took a heavy pull at it. But he seemed to have strange scruples about some bread and cheese which I proposed to share with him: the

bread he proceeded to masticate without inquiry, but the cheese awakened his gravest suspicion. He turned it over and over, smelt it and examined it with a queer expression of cunning and alarm; then, pointing up to heaven, demanded if it were "sanglier;" and upon my assuring him it was not, he devoured it like a ravenous wolf.

Lord S. described a capital day's shooting which he and some friends had had near Koléah. They found woodcock and wild-fowl of various kinds in such abundance that they killed about fifty head in a few hours. Koléah, which is eleven leagues from Algiers, was totally destroyed by an earthquake in 1825; but it has since been rebuilt by the French, and now boasts two or three comfortable hotels, from which the finest wild shooting in Algeria might be obtained. The advertised expense of a bachelor *en pension* at the Hôtel de la Régence is "70 francs *par mois et au-dessus*." The panther is not unfrequently found in the neighbourhood of Koléah: but from conversations I have had with French sportsmen, it appears they dread an encounter with this animal far more than with the lion.

Even a tree is no refuge from a wounded panther; he climbs it like a cat, and as long as life lasts, never ceases to follow the object of his revenge. Gerard himself loved a lion, but dreaded the panther.

March 18*th.*—The weather warm and comfortable, like a fine June day in England. Witnessed a Negro Fête at Mustapha Inférieur: the whole English community were present, and enjoyed the scene amazingly. It was held in a sandy nook of the beautiful bay of Algiers; and, from the number of vehicles, and the unbroken string of pedestrians, extending from the Babazoun to the chosen spot, there could be no doubt of its popularity among the holiday seekers of that city. In fact, it was a regular Derby day. A vast concourse of tents of every shape and fashion occupied the ground: Moorish ladies in crowds veiled to the very eyes, negroes and negro-women, Arabs and Europeans, mingled together to witness the celebration of this heathen rite. The day was dedicated to "the Saint of unfortunate women;" and to his honour an ox, a cock, and other animals were sacrificed in presence of the spectators. The

little ox, bedecked with flowers, and all unconscious of the fate that awaited him, was the great object of attraction to the ladies, who vied with each other in supplying him with handfuls of green clover, which he devoured as rapidly as it arrived.

"Pleased to the last, he crops the flowery food,
And licks the hand just raised to shed his blood."

The negroes danced in rings to the monotonous music of the tom-tom: the ox was slain, and his blood sprinkled on the faces of those engaged in the sacrifice: then the negroes danced again; and as the music grew livelier, the dance became faster and faster, till at length, in a frenzy, some cast themselves into the sea, while others rushed in madly to save them. After this exhibition, the ox, roasted whole, was the *pièce de résistance* in the feast that followed. M. Franco Ravan, the Portuguese consul at Algiers *, entertained a large party of English residents at luncheon, and most hospitably did he do it; while from the roof of his Moorish house,

* Monsieur Ravan is entitled to the writer's best thanks for the many acts of kindness and courtesy which he met with at his hands.

which was contiguous to the ground, Lady S. V. H. and the Marabout's lady made some capital sketches of the Negroes' Fête.

March 26th. — Shot quail with M. Ravan and Lord S., in the direction of Fondouck; killed spotted galinule, solitary snipe, calendar lark and quail; and had a bountiful roast of the latter at Madame Hoche's, where Vernon joined us at dinner. Slept that night at Fondouck, and found very comfortable quarters at Madame Hoche's hotel; but Vernon declared he was phle-botomised.

March 27th. —Visited a Café Maure outside the walls of this small fortified town, and found it a *bivouac des Indigènes.* Returned to breakfast, and then started for a boar-hunt. Under the direction of two Arab guides, we crossed the rapid river of Oued-Kremiz, and made straight for Ben-hadjel (the Son of the Partridge) in the forest of the Regaiah. About 200 yards below the point at which we forded the stream, were three Bedouin Arabs attempting to force a camel to take the water. The turbid and impetuous torrent, uncertain in depth and rocky in its channel, had more terror for the timid beast

than all the shouts and blows with which he was urged to proceed: he groaned aloud, as much from the danger in front, as from the infliction which he suffered in the rear. At length, human perseverance prevailed; and he landed on the opposite bank without trouble. It is said of the camel, but with what truth I am not prepared to state, that, unlike all other quadrupeds, he is unable to swim naturally; and that swimming is to him, as it is to man, an artificial accomplishment.

We crossed a spur of the little Atlas and rode through some wild and magnificent scenery before we reached the *rendezvous*. Wherever there was water, the rhododendron flourished in the wildest profusion, and on the hill-side the eye was dazzled with the double-blossomed broom, the cestus, and white heather. Fifty mounted Arabs came to the meet, accompanied by at least a hundred foot beaters. These drew the covers in line, at a distance of ten yards from each other; and did it just as methodically as a company of ragamuffins would draw a pheasant cover in our own country. How, with their naked legs and long burnouses, they managed to face the lentisks, tamarisks, and prickly brushwood

without being scarified and torn to tatters, was a mystery to all of us. O'er hill and dale, through goiles and ravines, they maintained an unbroken front; shouting to the boar to show himself, pitching huge stones into every hover that was likely to hold him, and banging the bushes with a myrtle club: no *battue* could have been more perfect. On the outskirts were the horsemen, armed with a rude gun and a ruder spear, prepared to give chase as soon as the game broke cover. The wiry steeds, all panting and eager for the sport, evidently anticipated a burst, and were with difficulty restrained by the riders. After drawing for at least an hour, we came to a hollow dingle, dark with the wild olive and overgrown with tangled creepers; it seemed the very homestead of a pig. And sure enough there were four deep in its recesses: in went a stone and out they came, heads and tails in the air, in a terrible hurry; the short grunt and the pricked ear expressing the alarm they felt at this unceremonious visit. Three did not like the look of the odds against them, so headed back and disappeared again in the dingle; the fourth, a brave hog, went a bounder

over the hill, and seemed, as he faced the "rocky open," to say "little I value you all." My *balle-mariée* was rammed home, and striking both spurs into my horse's flanks, I crammed for a lead, anxious to see all that was to be seen, and equally anxious, if possible, to kill the boar. For fifteen minutes the pace was as good as it usually is with foxhounds; and I never saw much harder riding. The rough country, bestrewn with blocks of stone and abounding with clumps of brushwood, offered no impediment to the sweep of the chase, the horses shortened or lengthened their strides with wonderful adroitness, as the pig turned, or the nature of the ground required it. In the meantime several shots had been fired and several spears hurled without effect; the wind and pace of the pig were telling upon the horses, and out of the many that started there were not more than five or six who now figured in front and lived with the chase. Twice or three times I pulled up my horse, and put up my gun to take a crack at the flyer; but, in an instant, as I slackened my speed, an Arab horseman took up the running, got up to the pig, and I dared

not shoot at the one, lest I should hit the other. At last, not liking to lose my place, I slung the gun over my back, and despairing of the honour, I rode for the pleasure of the chase. For forty minutes that pig stood in front of the field, going a cracker throughout; and had it not been for a foot Arab, who headed him and cut off his retreat towards a deep cover, he would certainly have escaped with his life. The Arab dropped upon his knee as the pig approached, then, within twenty yards, drew the trigger and rolled him headlong in the dust. In days gone by, I have seen Limpetty* on "Jack Shepherd," riding with a loose rein and looser seat, through a clitter of rocks on Dartmoor, with as little concern for his own or his horse's life as if both were immortal; and I have seen a horseman riding at a red deer a whole field before the Baron's hounds, they running on scent and he in view; but I never met a more determined set of riders than those Arab horsemen in the wilds of Algeria. Surely, the blood of their forefathers exhibits itself

* Limpetty is huntsman to Mr. Trelawny, the well-known master of hounds in the West of England.

in them: the hunters of the Atlas are still the true sons of ancient Numidia. The stragglers, who, from want of condition in their steeds, could not live with the first flight, dropped in by degrees for at least twenty minutes, and among them came, to my unbounded surprise, our old friend the camel, still sobbing and groaning as he had done at the river's side. His troubles had now increased; his three tormentors were mounted aloft on his back, the one in front carried a long gun, and the business of the others was to bang him forwards with heavy clubs: the poor beast was in evil case with his human freight; he was a gentle animal and lean withal, and I fully expected to see him come down under his burden.

We then found another boar, which afforded a burst of ten minutes over the open, and then was shot down. After this, we bid adieu to the kaid and his Arabs; and with many thanks on our part, and many kind replies on theirs, we turned our horses' heads towards Fondouck, and then trotted homewards.

The next time I hunt boar in the forest of the Regaiah, my sole weapon shall be a re-

volver, one of Faucheux's make, having six chambers and one barrel about ten inches in length. This deadly article is now supplied to the French navy, and for the following reasons is far superior to any of the revolvers which have yet been invented. It is perfectly simple in construction; it is loaded at the breech instantaneously with a cartridge which contains powder, conic ball, and percussion point all together; it has a circular plate in the shape of a saucer, which protects the nipples and renders an accident almost impossible; and lastly, it handles well and has a capital sight. The price of this weapon, complete, is only 125 francs, and for this sum it may be purchased in the Rue Babazoun, at a gunmaker's who alone has the privilege of selling gunpowder in Algiers.

With Faucheux's revolver, a couple of southern hounds having plenty of tongue and not too much speed, and a horse safe on his legs and light in hand, a man might have an unlimited amount of sport at boars in Algeria. But, if he aspire to rarer game, there is the lion, the panther, the gazelle, the bustard, and the ostrich, in the Tell and Sahara of that

country. The chase of the ostrich is held in high estimation, and is only followed by the Arab aristocrat, who makes a long and expensive preparation for its enjoyment. For some weeks before the time appointed for the sport, the Arab feeds and trains his horses with especial care; and, unless their wind and condition are perfect, they stand no chance with the ostrich, he runs them out of sight. This is exactly what is done in our own country by good kennel management; the fox is overmatched by the *condition* of the hound. There is a curious point of similarity between the English sportsman and the aristocrat of the Sahara; he rides his second horse in the chase of the ostrich as the other does in that of the fox. But, if anything, he of the desert has the advantage; he posts his relay with such a thorough knowledge of the running of his game, that he rarely misses his mount; whereas the Meltonian makes a bad cast frequently, and as frequently he finds his second horse already half beaten by the bad management of his groom. When the ostrich is blown in the chase, the rider strikes him a sharp tap on his featherless head, and at once deprives him of

life, a small stick being his sole weapon. A kous-koussou, surmounted by cutlets taken from the breast of the ostrich, is the royal dish of the desert; while the steam from the boiled fat imparts an unctuous taste and gamy flavour to the whole. The Arab of the desert exchanges ostrich feathers for corn grown by the Arabs of the Tell; thus their value to the former is incalculable, and, were it not for the kous-koussou, they might follow the plan of the Lincolnshire fen-men with very justifiable advantage, that is, pluck the birds alive and turn them out for another crop. A visitor, anxious to witness the chase of the ostrich, in order to obtain accommodation and approximation to the hunting-ground, should go to Tougourt, the capital of thirty-five villages in the Oasis of Oued-Rir, seventy-six leagues from Biskra; or to Leghrouat, a town of four thousand inhabitants, south-west of Biskra; or to Gardaia, a town of the Beni-Mzab, easily accessible from Algiers, all within the Algerian Sahara, and consequently under the government and protection of France.

For bustard and gazelle the sportsman need not go so far afield: from Teniet-el-hâd or

Boghar, military stations within three days of Algiers, on the borders of the Algerian Sahara, the gazelle is found in abundance, and throughout the Sahara the bustard is equally plentiful. When Vernon visited Teniet-el-hâd, he found a caravansérail half-way between Millianah and that place: the quarters he described as sufficiently good for a bachelor, and the country around truly charming for the hunter — great quantities of game of every description roamed in the vicinity; the tracks of the boars were like those of rabbits in a warren; partridges were so numerous that the Arabs knocked them down with sticks; while an occasional lion startled the wanderer, and roared defiance against the advance of civilisation. But the sport of sports, novel to the English gentleman of modern days, though familiar to him of old, is that of hawking. Among most of the tribes on the southern confines of Algeria the pastime is pursued with much ardour and ceremony; it is, however, exclusive, and is enjoyed only by the aristocrats. Four kinds of hawks, one of which is the famed Barbary Falcon, are used for the purpose, and these are trained with consummate craft and ability. Of course the open and treeless plains of the Sahara

afford facilities for the enjoyment of this sport such as few countries could supply.

No Englishman who has time and means at his disposal, and who has any predilection for field sports, should visit Algiers without going to see the noble falcons of the tribe Ouled-Sidi-Sheikh, or those of the Hameian-Gharaba tribe in the south-western extremity of the Little Sahara. The docility of the birds, the rapidity of their flight, and the fatal swoop, as I have been informed by an eye-witness, is a marvel of perfection, and exhibits no less the ingenuity of man, than the dominion given to him "over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."

April 15th. — Shot quail in the Metidja plain, with Vernon and Ravan, the Portuguese consul. Killed Bayonne's crake, a rare bird of the galinule tribe: also two spotted galinules, several small yellow wagtails (*Motacilla neglecta*), and a bagful of quail. The plain resembled a beautiful green carpet, spangled with colours of the richest hue; a small blue iris, the convolvulus minor, a bee orchis, mallows, and marygold, in profusion around us. The calendar lark, resembling the pewit

in the heavy flap of his wing, and indicating thereby a similarity of habit, being always found in the marshes, mounted aloft, and sang us some sweet songs after the fashion of our own native wood-lark. Vernon bagged a specimen or two, but agreed in thinking it was a sin to slay so sweet a minstrel.

Entered an Arab gourbie, and had coffee and pipes with some friendly Arabs: they held the forefingers of the right and left hand together, side by side, to signify that the Inglese and Arabs were brothers.

April 16*th.* — Felt two shocks of an earthquake; second very sharp. The inhabitants rushed out in a great state of alarm, and many would not enter their houses again during the rest of the day. The china cups on our shelves were shaken at least an inch from the spot on which they originally stood, the displacement being observable in the dust.

Mounted to the fourth *étage* of a French Algerine house. It was a perfect menagerie of human beings from top to bottom: — Jews, Turks, Spaniards, Italians, Mahonese, French; the Jew and Gentile, in every form, dwelt there. These lofty, flimsy houses, built by

the French, when a violent earthquake does come, will topple to pieces like a pack of cards, and great will be the ruin thereof.

April 22nd.— A grand ovation, with fireworks, welcomed Marshal Randon's return from France this day. He appears to be very popular as a Governor; but the secret of this demonstration consists, it is said, in the success with which he advocated the necessity of a railway in Algeria. The Emperor was "satisfied that the wants of the colony required it, and that its construction should take place accordingly." Whether this be the true cause of the ovation or not, certain it is that a railway is looked upon as the one great desideratum necessary to the welfare of the colony. And apparently there could be no more fitting time than the present for such an important work. Land is cheap; the Kabyle war is happily at an end; military penal labour is abundant, and the prospects of the colony are altogether cheering. Now, then, is the time for these Romans of the modern world to construct their bridges, viaducts, and aqueducts, and to outvie, as they can by the advancement of science, even the works of their great proto-

types. But the late report of the Minister of War, on the present state of Algeria (1857), does not encourage the colonists to believe that their hope of a railway will directly be fulfilled. After referring to the Artesian wells, which have been dug for the benefit of the colony, and by which land hitherto unproductive has become fertile and luxuriant, that report winds up in the following words:—

"In whatever way I consider Algeria as regards its native population, I have nothing but improvement to announce to your Majesty. The country in a state of tranquillity, roads in course of construction, increase of cultivation, public works in progress, crimes and transgressions diminishing, the Arab population more inclined to obedience; every day, I may say, rewards our efforts with fresh success. Our moral influence even extends beyond our sphere of action. Have we not this year seen the chiefs of various tribes disseminated along the route of Soudan, where they chiefly live by plunder, who, moved by what they had heard in their distant country, came to Algiers in order to convince themselves, with their own eyes, of the truth of the narratives which,

brought over to their desert solitudes, had pictured to them the glory and power of France? On leaving, they engaged to second the efforts we are about to make in order to open a commercial intercourse with the kingdoms of Timbuctoo and Haoussa. The arrival at Algiers of the Tooareg chiefs, is, in my opinion, the most convincing proof of the respect which the French name commands among the native populations. There still remains much to be done, no doubt, in order completely to attach the Arabs to French civilisation. But are not the results we have obtained a pledge for the future? In so delicate a task, the most difficult part was to surmount the antipathy of race and religious jealousy. All would have been endangered had we listened to the unreflecting impatience of those who wanted, without any transition, and by sheer force, to bring the natives under the rule of the laws and customs of France. We have found the means of rendering success certain, by letting time and private interest play the principal part in this transformation of the Arab race. It is our duty now to enter more fully into the course which the experience of

the last few years has taught us to be the best."

April 23rd.—St. George's Day. The tribe of Beni-Khelil made a grand pilgrimage to the Marabout's tomb, near Moustapha. A fantasia, or display of horsemanship, astonished a vast number of spectators, amongst whom the Moorish ladies of Algiers were not the least conspicuous. These sat in rows together, and held communication not even with each other; but their eyes spake volumes. Encased in haiks and soft envelopements, all whiter than the driven snow, they looked the personification of innocence; the eyes of some, however, peeped forth brighter than any Vestal lamp, and conveyed a suspicion that nothing of snow, beyond the colour of their garments, appertained to these attractive ladies. A French officer made a foolish attempt to address one of them; but he could not have said four words, before a well-dressed Moor jumped upon his legs and approached him with a menacing attitude. In an instant, a police officer, whose duty it was to superintend the Moorish ladies, interfered;

and by requesting the officer to move off, quieted the rising storm.

May 9th.—The weather had now become so warm, that the greater part of the English residents had already left Algiers. Indeed, with the exception of ourselves, and the M'D.'s, Vernon and his lady alone remained. This day, then, we embarked on board the "Osiris," a fine and well-appointed steamer belonging to the "*Messageries Impériales*" Company; and bidding adieu to Algiers with much regret, we arrived at Marseilles in forty-four hours, after an easy and delightful voyage.

THE END.

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